

ELECTORAL POLITICS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL
IN THE GERMAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC

By

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This study examines the relationship of the German party system to local voting behavior. The voting strength of political parties, the incidence of national parties, the pattern of voting dispersion, and the degree of electoral participation vary between levels of government. Yet, since no time-series analysis of local elections has been attempted, generalizations about the German party system have relied on observations of national patterns. This dissertation, therefore, investigates variations in the rate and direction of party change in light of the structural contexts of local political behavior.

The longitudinal and cross-sectional analyses employ census and electoral data from the state of Rhineland-Palatinate. The ecological variables are obtained from the 1961 census, and the political variables are obtained from the eighteen local, state, and national elections held between 1947 and 1969. The data unit is the Gemeinde, the most local level of German government.

After an overview of local electoral politics based on the universe of Gemeinden, a more comprehensive examination is performed using a 20 percent sample of 588 Gemeinden derived according to systematic sampling procedures. Recomputations of the data furnish scales of politicization

and indexes of partisan mobilization and party change. The data are analyzed through a variety of bi- and multivariate statistical techniques. For example, factor analysis is used to determine the dimensions of Gemeinde socio-economic growth in order to test one hypothesis of party development.

The analysis of the data allows the comparison of the development of party voting within local elections to the development of party voting in state and national elections. The primary areas of concern are the style of local politics, the relationship of ecological and political variables in local voting behavior, and the tie-in of the local party-vote relationships with the state and national party-vote relationships.

The findings point up the importance of studying the significant within-nation differences in political behavior. The most marked discrepancies occur in the degree of politicization. While the role of political parties is circumscribed at the grass-roots level of the German political system, citizen participation remains high. Comparatively, the study discusses the utility of local trends for generalizing about the process of change in party systems.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Conceptual Framework

The comparative study of political party systems has gained the attention of an increasing number of political scientists and sociologists.¹ Most obvious is the proliferation of studies derived from analyses of voting statistics and sample surveys, which were made possible by the widespread advent of computer technology. These studies furnish considerable descriptions of the voting behavior of mass electorates with their concurrent party preferences. More recently, concern has focused on how societal conflicts are translated into party systems with an emphasis on the historical dimension of party development.² Yet studies of change in party systems often leave more questions unresolved than answered.³

The present study limits itself to one problematic area of contemporary research: the "whole-nation bias," which results from considering a nation as a unit for the purposes of gathering aggregate statistical data.⁴ Such macroanalysis that disregards the significant within-nation variations in political behavior is inadequate to arrive at any systematic understanding of the process of party change. A foremost deficiency is the neglect of the structural contexts of local political behavior. As the base of the political system, the local setting is where the majority of citizens have the contact with officials

and agencies of government that largely shapes their perspectives toward politics. The socio-economic environment and the political environment of voters vary considerably intranationally. Yet for the sake of generalization, these dispersions are simplified into a uniform set of stimuli impinging on voter behavior.

A variety of country studies which have examined party systems at the national and local levels question such aggregation. V. O. Key early suggested that general theories about American parties had little relevance to describing local political behavior.⁵ Writing twenty years later, other students of the American party system still conclude: "the data are far from sufficient to permit more than the most speculative generalizations about the nature of the local electorate."⁶ In his study of French communities, Mark Kesselman vividly describes the discontinuities in local and national political habits and their reflection in the party system.⁷ Students of the Scandinavian party systems advance the most prolific and persuasive arguments for the importance of comparative community analysis through their time series analyses of electoral behavior.⁸

However, archives of information on party and voting on the local level for most countries are more noted for their paucity than any other characteristic. One of the many countries for which there is a great void in such information is West Germany--although the German party system is the subject of intense concern. This attention undoubtedly derives from the incongruencies of German history and their manifestations in the radically different political systems of the present century. Many observers implicitly share the belief: "In each case, the party

system, better than any other single index, reflects the style of politics of that period."⁹

The multiplicity of political parties in the Weimar era mirrored the extreme cultural fragmentation and the lack of supportive consensual bases for democratic politics. Numerous parties remained divided over the functions of government, and effective government was an impossibility. The collapse of the Weimar Republic and the growth of a totalitarian state and society was symbolized by the monolithic party system of the Nazi period. Finally, the movement toward a competitive, two-party system evident in the postwar period is heralded as suggestive of a growing political consensus conducive to democracy.

Yet, all attempts to understand the process of party change have been confined to the realm of national political behavior. There has been no analysis of local electoral behavior to discern its consequences for or relationship to the party system. We thus propose to investigate the development of the party system at the local level and to compare it to the development of the party system at the national level. Variations among German communities in their rates and directions of party change should aid an understanding of party system transformation.

This study focuses upon three categories of information: 1) the characteristics of local electoral politics, e.g., the voting strength of political parties, the incidence of national parties, the pattern of voting dispersion, and the degree of electoral participation; 2) the relationship of ecological and political variables in local voting behavior, e.g., the social and economic conditions necessary

for the initial formation and subsequent maintenance of political parties, and the relevance of social and economic factors in influencing voter participation and voter support for specific parties; and 3) the tie-in between the party system at the local level and the party system at the national and state levels, e.g., the effect of the local party-vote relationship on the national party-vote relationship or inversely the effect of the national party system upon the local party system, and the characteristics of voters at the various levels of electoral politics.

Relevance of the National Party System

The unique domestic and international environmental conditions, which encompassed the founding of the Federal Republic in 1949, provided the base for the growth of formal democratic and pluralistic political institutions.¹⁰ The party system among these institutions has been the keystone of Germany's unprecedented political stability of the past quarter-century. Two trends support the possibility of an institutionalization of democratic structures in Germany: the movement toward a two-party competitive system and the movement toward alternation in power between the parties.¹¹ A two-party system may be viewed as a reflection of the decline of the traditional political and social cleavages disruptive to the requirement of the basic consensual nature of a democracy.¹² A smooth transition of power between major competing parties, such as resulted in the 1969 federal election, may be considered as one of the crucial tests of stability in a democracy.¹³

The transformation from a multiparty system to a two-party dominant system is summarized by reviewing federal electoral returns (Table 1).¹⁴

TABLE 1
PERCENTAGE OF PARTY VOTE RECEIVED BY MAJOR
PARTIES IN FEDERAL ELECTIONS, 1949-1969^a

| Year. | CDU/CSU | SPD | FDP | Others | CDU/CSU + SPD |
|-------|---------|------|------|--------|---------------|
| 1949 | 31.0 | 29.2 | 11.9 | 23.7 | 60.2 |
| 1953 | 45.2 | 28.8 | 9.5 | 16.5 | 74.0 |
| 1957 | 50.2 | 31.8 | 7.7 | 10.3 | 81.0 |
| 1961 | 45.3 | 36.2 | 12.8 | 5.7 | 81.5 |
| 1965 | 47.6 | 39.3 | 9.5 | 3.6 | 86.9 |
| 1969 | 46.1 | 42.7 | 5.8 | 5.4 | 88.8 |

^aSecond ballot returns. The official names of the parties are Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union, Social Democratic Party, and Free Democratic Party.

The combined strength of the CDU/CSU and the SPD has thus increased steadily with each election. Concurrently, the share of the popular vote by minor parties has decreased; the FDP is the only other party to consistently retain a nationwide following.

The first fatalities in the consolidation of the party system were the small regional parties. The Center Party (ZP) and the German Party (DP), which had surmounted the 5 percent clause in 1953 and 1957 elections, respectively, survived largely through the aid of the CDU.¹⁵ Other minor parties representing special interest groups disappeared as their constituencies were integrated into the national system.¹⁶

The trend toward a two party system is reinforced at the state level. Table 2 gives the combined CDU and SPD vote for each state in

in the first Landtag election and in the last Landtag election preceding the 1969 federal election.¹⁷

TABLE 2

LANDTAG ELECTIONS: PERCENTAGE OF VOTE
RECEIVED BY THE CDU AND THE SPD

| State | 1946/1947 | 1966/1968 |
|------------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| Bavaria (CSU & SPD) | 80.9 | 83.9 |
| Baden-Wuerttemberg | 72.8 ^a | 73.2 |
| Bremen | 63.7 | 75.5 |
| Hamburg | 69.8 | 89.0 |
| Hesse | 73.7 | 77.4 |
| Lower Saxony | 63.3 | 84.8 |
| North Rhine-Westphalia | 69.6 | 92.3 |
| Rhineland-Palatinate | 81.5 | 83.5 |
| Saar | .. | 83.4 |
| Schleswig-Holstein | 85.4 | 85.4 |

^aPercentage of vote was obtained by averaging the results from the three states of Baden, Wuerttemberg-Baden, and Wuerttemberg-Hohenzollern.

In terms of Bundestag representation, the consolidation of the party system is supported by the vote-seat distribution distorted by the 5 percent clause.¹⁸ Whereas ten parties won seats in 1949, by 1953 only six parties gained entry into the legislative chamber, and the CDU/CSU gained an absolute majority of the seats. The reduction continued so that in 1957 only four parties crossed the representative barrier. In 1961 the present pattern was completed when the CDU/CSU, SPD, and FDP held all parliamentary seats (Table 3).

TABLE 3
PERCENTAGE OF BUNDESTAG SEATS RECEIVED
BY MAJOR PARTIES, 1949-1969

| Year | CDU/CSU | SPD | FDP | Others | CDU/CSU + SPD |
|------|---------|------|------|--------|---------------|
| 1949 | 34.6 | 32.6 | 12.9 | 15.7 | 67.2 |
| 1953 | 50.1 | 31.0 | 9.9 | 9.0 | 81.1 |
| 1957 | 54.3 | 34.0 | 8.3 | 3.4 | 88.3 |
| 1961 | 48.5 | 38.1 | 13.4 | .. | 86.6 |
| 1965 | 49.4 | 40.7 | 9.9 | .. | 90.1 |
| 1969 | 48.8 | 45.2 | 6.0 | .. | 94.0 |

In spite of the SPD's growing attractiveness to the voters, until the 1960s the CDU dominated the government under the strong leadership of Chancellor Adenauer.¹⁹ With his demise and Erhard's weak leadership as Chancellor and party chairman, the SPD for the first time gained national power through their entry into the Grand Coalition of 1966.²⁰ Alternation in government between the major parties was finally attained after the 1969 election when the SPD assumed leadership. The 1969 election thus symbolizes the substantial political change which has occurred in the transformation of the German party system.²¹ Characteristic of the normal developmental pattern of regime institutionalization is movement toward a two party system of government and opposition.²² Both this pattern and this movement are evidenced on the national and state levels in Germany.

Relevance of Local Governmental Units

Despite the interest in and the extensive research on the German party system, the local party system has been ignored. The lack of comparative data for local parties and voting behavior precludes a

systematic account of the process of party transformation. The fragility of macro generalizations is notable whether viewed from the standpoint of a theory of party change or of the historical importance of German communities.

The contextual conditioning of electoral behavior is significant. Much of the current party research cited above investigates the influence of primary and secondary group influence on voters. The variables of class, religion, age, and sex account for much of the variation in national voting behavior in Germany as well as in other countries.²³ Yet the impact of the immediate social and political environment (the community) has been disregarded.²⁴

Just as we expect some patterns in common across nations so do we anticipate variation among those same nations. We should also seek these contrasts within nations. Exemplary of intranational differences which condition individual participation is the range of alternatives available to voters and the alignment of forces conditioning their behavior.²⁵ A familiar case in point in the United States is the prevalence of nonpartisan municipal elections as opposed to partisan national elections. The type of election is, however, only one of the many possible variations existing between and among levels of government. Exclusive preoccupation with national voting behavior may severely distort attempts to derive the sources of change in party systems.

The neglect in studying local elections assumes an extra dimension in the case of German parties. Postwar governmental reconstruction gave initial and special emphasis to the most local units of government.²⁶

Political parties were first formed at the municipal (Gemeinde) level, with the result that local elections were held in 1946, three years prior to the first federal election.

To restore democracy at the grass-roots or Gemeinde level was a basic premise of the Potsdam Agreement.

The administration of affairs in Germany should be directed towards the decentralization of the responsibility . . . (i) local self-government shall be restored throughout Germany on democratic principles and in particular through elective councils as rapidly as consistent with military security and the purposes of military occupation; (ii) all democratic political parties with rights of assembly and of public discussions shall be allowed and encouraged throughout Germany; (iii) representative and elective principles shall be introduced into regional, provincial, and state (Land) administration as rapidly as may be justified by the successful application of these principles in local self-government.²⁷

The importance of these initial party formations and electoral competitions at the local level in conditioning the subsequent development of the party system has been discussed but not validated through any time series analysis.²⁸ Until now no investigation has attempted to see if and how the major parties did, in effect, gain , the initiative in local politics.

A Note on Methodology

A research orientation toward municipalities and political parties at that level contains an additional asset to recommend itself as an approach to the study of party systems and voting behavior. The Gemeinde is a data unit with which people identify themselves and others. Other units such as voting districts and precincts are purely administrative. By choosing an area which corresponds to citizens'

awareness and identity, the interpretation of ecological data may be enhanced.²⁹

To investigate the development of the party system at the local level, longitudinal and cross-sectional analyses employ electoral and demographic statistics from the state of Rhineland-Palatinate. Demographic variables are obtained from the eighteen local, state, and national elections held between 1947 and 1969. The data unit is the Gemeinde, the most local level of German government.

After an overview of local electoral politics based on the universe of Gemeinden in Rhineland-Palatinate, a more comprehensive examination is performed using a 20 percent sample of 588 Gemeinden derived according to systematic sampling procedures.³⁰ The data are then analyzed through a variety of bi- and multivariate statistical techniques. The nature of the data collection allows a simultaneous exploration of how parties are conditioned by the structural and environmental contexts of the Gemeinde and of how the Gemeinde is conditioned by the party system.³¹

Notes

¹Illustrative of such studies are Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, eds., Political Parties and Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), Robert A. Dahl, ed., Political Opposition in Western Democracies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, eds., Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives (New York: The Free Press, 1967), Leon Epstein, Political Parties in Western Democracies (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1967), and Stein Rokkan et al., Citizens Elections Parties (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1970).

²See Lipset and Rokkan, eds.

³For critical evaluations of the state of theories of party systems, see Giovanni Sartori, "From the Sociology of Politics to Political Sociology," in Politics and the Social Sciences, ed. by Seymour M. Lipset (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 65-100, and Peter H. Merkl, "Political Cleavages and Party Systems," Review Article, World Politics, XXI, No. 3 (April, 1969), 469-485.

⁴This tendency is not limited to the analysis of processes of party development; indeed, it stems from the same fallacy in the analysis of the general process of political development. See Stein Rokkan, "Methods and Models in the Comparative Study of Nation-Building," in Rokkan et al., p. 49.

⁵V. O. Key, Jr., Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups (2nd ed.; New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1948), p. 224.

⁶Robert R. Alford and Eugene C. Lee, "Voting Turnout in American Cities," The American Political Science Review, LXVII, No. 3 (September, 1968), 796. For a recent survey analysis, see Howard D. Hamilton, "The Municipal Voter: Voting and Nonvoting in City Elections," The American Political Science Review, LXV, No. 4 (December, 1971), 1135-1140. See also Angus Campbell et al., The American Voter: An Abridgement (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1964), pp. 145-159 for a discussion of the importance of the local political context on voting behavior.

⁷Mark Kesselman, The Ambiguous Consensus: A Study of Local Government in France (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1967).

⁸In addition to the works cited by Rokkan *supra*, see Stein Rokkan, ed., Approaches to the Study of Political Participation (Bergen: Christian Michelsen Institute, 1962), Erik Allardt, "Implications of Within-Nation Variations and Regional Imbalances for Cross-National Research," in Comparing Nations: The Use of Quantitative Data in Cross-National Research, ed. by Richard L. Merritt and Stein Rokkan (New Haven:

Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 337-348, Stein Rokkan and Henry Valen, "Regional Contrasts in Norwegian Politics," in Mass Politics: Studies in Political Sociology, ed. by Erik Allardt and Stein Rokkan (New York: The Free Press, 1970), pp. 190-247, and Stein Rokkan, "Electoral Mobilization, Party Competition, and National Integration," in LaPalombara and Winer, eds., pp. 241-165.

⁹Charles E. Frye, "Parties and Pressure Groups in Weimar and Bonn," in Politics in Europe, ed. by Arend Lijphart (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 209.

¹⁰For a discussion of the impact of social development as a conditioning factor of German government, see the excellent book by Ralf Dahrendorf, Society and Democracy in German (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1967).

¹¹"Institutionalization is the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability." Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 12. For a discussion of institutionalization as applied to Germany, see Lewis J. Edinger, "Political Change in Germany," Comparative Politics, II, No. 4 (July, 1970), 549-578, and Werner Kaltefleiter, "The Impact of the Election of 1969 and the Formation of the New Government on the German Party System," Comparative Politics, II, No. 4 (July, 1970), 593-603. This entire issue of Comparative Politics is devoted to an analysis of the German party system.

¹²Edinger, p. 568.

¹³See Kaltefleiter. He argues that the 1969 change in power only partially fulfilled the conditions for stability.

¹⁴The electoral system is one of modified proportional representation. Each voter casts two ballots--one for a district deputy and one for a state (Land) party list. Since 1953, 50 percent of the Bundestag deputies are elected from the single-member districts and 50 percent from the state lists. A party must average 5 percent of the national vote or win at least three district contests to secure representation in the Bundestag.

¹⁵For example, the German party won six direct seats in the Bundestag. In five of these seats, the party was unopposed by the CDU. Samuel H. Barnes et al., "The German Party System and the 1961 Federal Election," The American Political Science Review, LVI, No. 4, (December, 1962), 900. See also Uwe W. Kitzinger, German Electoral Politics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960).

¹⁶Illustrative of such special interest parties were the Economic Reconstruction Association (WAV) and the Refugee Party (BHE).

¹⁷In Baden-Wuerttemberg, Bremen, Hesse, and Rhineland-Palatinate, the combined votes of the CDU and the SPD were lower in 1966-1968 than at the preceding state elections. The National Democratic Party (NPD), established in 1964, received Landtag representation in these states as well as in Bavaria, Lower Saxony, and Schleswig-Holstein. The NPD did not, however, receive sufficient votes for representation in the 1969 Bundestag election. For a discussion of the role of the NPD in the party system, see Steven Warnecke, "The Future of Rightist Extremism in West Germany," Comparative Politics, II, No. 4 (July, 1970), 629-652, and Rudolph Heberle, "Analysis of a Neo-Fascist Party: The NPD," Polity, III, No. 1 (Fall, 1970), 126-134.

¹⁸For a discussion of the relationship between the electoral law and the party system, see David P. Conradt, "Electoral Law Politics in West Germany," Political Studies, XVIII, No. 3 (September, 1970), 341-356.

¹⁹For a comprehensive treatment of the topic, see Arnold J. Heidenheimer, Adenauer and the CDU (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960).

²⁰See Linda J. Landers, "The Decline in the Authority and Prestige of Ludwig Erhard as West German Chancellor" (Master's thesis, University of Florida, 1969).

²¹For detailed analyses of voting behavior in the 1969 election, see David P. Conradt, The West German Party System: An Ecological Analysis of Social Structure and Voting Behavior, 1949-1969 (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, Inc., 1972), and Max Kaase, "Determinants of Voting Behavior in the West German General Election of 1969" (unpublished manuscript, Mannheim: Institut fuer Sozialwissenschaften, 1969). For analyses of earlier elections, see Erwin K. Scheuch and Rudolf Wildenmann, Zur Soziologie der Wahl (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1965), Wolfgang Hirsch-Weber and Klaus Schuetz, Wahler und Gewaehlte (Berlin: Verlag Franz Vahlen GmbH, 1957), and Erwin Paul, Wahlen und Wahler in Westdeutschland (Villingen/Schwarzwald: Ring-Verlag, 1960). Paul introduces comparative data from the Weimar and Reich periods in his analysis of postwar electoral behavior.

²²Edinger, p. 572.

²³See the election studies cited in note 21, supra.

²⁴Cf. Kesselman and Hamilton.

²⁵Stein Rokkan, Citizen Participation in Political Life: A Comparison of Data for Norway and the United States of America, in Rokkan et al., p. 305.

²⁶See Edward H. Litchfield and Associates, Governing Postwar Germany (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1953).

²⁷"Report of the Tripartite Conference of Berlin," quoted in Herbert Jacob, German Administration Since Bismarck: Central Authority versus Local Autonomy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 154.

²⁸Gerhard Lowenberg, "The Remaking of the German Party System: Political and Socio-economic Factors," Polity, I (1968), 87-113.

²⁹Allardt, p. 340.

³⁰Twelve Gemeinden were excluded from the data analysis--eleven because of boundary changes and one because of its "Gemeinde-frei Bezirk" status.

³¹Sartori, p. 93.

CHAPTER II

THE GERMAN GEMEINDE

Historical Development

The term local government may be applied in two ways. The first usage refers to government by local agents who are appointed by and responsible to the central government. The second usage refers to government by local bodies, freely elected, who are enabled with power and responsibility in certain respects; although subject to the supremacy of a national government, these bodies exercise control over local concerns.¹ The latter meaning of communal autonomy is the tradition to which the German communities have tended.²

Many Gemeinden possess a long history of independence, preceding the foundation of the nation state. The autonomy of cities was characteristic of the 12th and 13th centuries. As monarchical rule and consolidation occurred, especially in Prussia, the medieval political power of the communities declined. However, local self-government, as an important aspect of German politics, was revived in the 19th century following Napoleon's defeat of Prussia. The name most associated with this resurrection was the Baron von Stein, the chief architect of the municipal ordinance act of 1808.³ These reforms established a system of municipal self-government with local citizen participation. Stein's belief that local government was the foundation of a free state influenced communal development until 1933.

The Weimar Constitution explicitly recognized this current of thought in democratizing the legal foundations of local government. Article 127 stated: "Gemeinde and Gemeindeverbaende have the right of self-government within the limits of the laws."⁴ In place of the Prussian system of three class suffrage, representative bodies at all levels of government were selected by universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage through a proportional representation (PR) electoral system. State constitutions also reflected the right to popularly elected municipal councils.

Although the forms of local self-government varied among the states, three types were characteristic: 1) a single council system, which combined legislative and executive functions, was dominant in south Germany; 2) an elected council, which then chose the mayor with long tenure who held the executive functions, was characteristic of the Rhineland section; Konrad Adenauer, the mayor of Cologne from 1917 to 1933 typified this "dominant mayor" form; 3) a bicameral municipal legislature was common in the Prussian areas of north Germany. The lower house, elected directly by the people, invested executive power in a plural board of magistrates which served as the upper chamber.⁵

Autonomy as a cornerstone of municipal government was completely discarded during the Nazi period. The German Municipal Government Act of 1935 abolished all local elections. Mayors and city councilors were agents of the Nazi party and national government and were appointed by these upper levels.

The historical tradition of local self-government was resumed in the postwar period. As early as 1942, allied officials planned for a grass-roots' approach to reconstruction through local self-government.⁶

The desire to return to the pre-Hitler forms was expressly stated in the Potsdam Agreement. The reconstruction of Germany initiating at the local level was made more necessary in that no higher levels of government remained. While the boundaries of most German states were substantially altered by the allied powers, the Gemeinde remained relatively intact. The heritage of self-government of many communities was thus preserved and strengthened. Local Gemeinde organizations and elections were authorized in the occupied zones between 1945 and 1946.

Local self-government as an institution is protected in Article 28 of the Basic Law of 1949.

'Gemeinde' must be guaranteed the right to regulate, under their own responsibility and within the limits of the laws, all the affairs of the local community.⁷

Various articles in the state constitutions further reinforce the right of the Gemeinde to self-government.⁸ Legally, local governments have the right to perform tasks not expressly prohibited or otherwise regulated by laws--in contrast to other systems of local government whereby the units may perform only those tasks prescribed in their charters or by national and state laws.⁹

The Structure of Local Government

There are 23,629 Gemeinden in the Federal Republic.¹⁰ These basic units of the political system range in area and in population from the tiny rural village of less than 100 inhabitants to the large urban metropolis of one million and more inhabitants. The overwhelming majority of the municipalities are small. Ninety-six percent have populations of less than 10,000 and almost 90 percent of the total encompass 3,000 or less inhabitants.¹¹

Common to all is an elected city council, the main representative body of the community. These councils range in size from five to eighty members. The number of councilors is set by state laws according to the population of the Gemeinde. The method of election varies among the states but most adhere to a proportional representation type system. Most states adopt a "closed list" system whereby the voter must choose among lists rather than individual candidates. In contrast, straight majority voting is usually permitted only if one or no lists are filed. Baden-Wuerttemberg and Bavaria utilize an electoral system whereby each elector has as many votes as there are council members to be elected. The elector may distribute his votes among candidates or cast them as a block for one.¹² Local elections generally occur every four years with the date varying among the states; within a state, all local elections occur on the same date.

The organizational structure of the Gemeinde is determined by state law and reflects regional diversity and modified organizational forms of the Weimar period.¹³ These structures are uniform within a state. The states of North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, and Hesse center administrative powers in a nonpolitical city manager who is responsible to the elected city council.¹⁴ Local governments in Schleswig-Holstein exhibit a similar form with a collegial executive. Rhineland-Palatinate continues in its tradition of a dominant mayor system, with the mayor responsible to the council. The elected municipal council combines both executive and legislative functions in the states of Bavaria and Baden-Wuerttemberg, and the mayor is directly elected by the citizens. The city states of Bremen and Hamburg combine the functions of both municipal and state governments in a collegial executive, the Senate.¹⁵

The tasks of local government are illustrated by the following categories: 1) technical concerns such as regulation of utilities and operation of public transportation systems; 2) maintenance of cultural institutions including schools, libraries, theaters, and museums; 3) social welfare functions centering around hospitals, health care, homes for the aged, and public welfare assistance; and 4) communal tasks as in street maintenance and city planning.¹⁶

Local governments are empowered to obtain revenue necessary to carrying out their responsibilities through two forms of taxes (Realstuern). The most important local tax source is the Gewerbesteuer, which is levied on the production and capital investment of industrial and commercial enterprises. The other tax (Grundsteuer) derives from real estate holdings. Communities may also levy local taxes on such items as beverages, entertainment, hunting licenses, etc.¹⁷

As the scope of activities and services increases in an industrialized society, local governments, while not without their own revenue sources, are increasingly dependent upon higher levels of government for financial support. Funds from the state treasuries supplement the funds the local governments can obtain on their own and equalize the financial strength of cities to an extent. Cities with a large industrial base are in a better financial situation than others--although financing remains a major problem for local governments.¹⁸

The German tradition of local self-government does not, however, equate financial dependence or administrative interdependence with a lack of communal autonomy. Self-government is viewed almost exclusively in terms of autonomy in the execution of local taxes and in the independence of decisions reached by freely elected governmental organs.¹⁹

To perform the services which are beyond the means of individual municipalities, both administratively and financially, most Gemeinden are joined in Gemeindeverbaende (associations). The most basic and common type is the Kreis (county). The more populous cities obtain the legal distinction of Stadtkreis (city-county); there are no uniform rules as to when a Gemeinde obtains Stadtkreis status.²⁰ The primary organs of county governments are an elected council (Kreistag) and an executive official, the Landrat, who is elected by the council except in Bavaria, where he is directly elected by the people.

In several states, an intervening joint authority is created between the Gemeinde and the Kreis: the Amt, which unites several small neighboring communities for administrative purposes. Additional intermunicipal associations (Zweckverbaende) are created for specific purposes such as maintenance of utilities. There are 5,000 such special authorities throughout Germany.²¹

The counties, in addition to performing joint operations that their member communities are incapable of, serve to redistribute taxes for local purposes. Counties, like the municipalities, depend upon state treasuries. State grants-in-aid account for an average of one-half of the counties' revenues, although the reliance on the state varies greatly among the states. For instance, in Bavaria state grants total 63.9 percent of the counties' incomes; counties in North Rhine-Westphalia derive only 37.9 percent of their income from the state.²²

A discussion of a Gemeinde in terms of its institutional structures and its financial and administrative reliance upon the state is by no means a complete portrayal. A Gemeinde, as a community, may have an extensive social and political impact upon its inhabitants. In spite

of the mobility inherent in modern society, the majority of the people spend a large part, if not all, of their lives in a single community. The Gemeinde then signifies an important dimension of a total life experience; it is the foundation and common denominator of a variety of social activities.²³ Localistic influences stemming from a distinct socio-cultural environment leave their imprint on the political process.

The Style of Local Politics

When we turn from the legalistic and administrative approaches in studying local government to a consideration of the nature and processes of local politics, we find little systematized knowledge. This section, drawing upon the meager amount of information on politics at the Gemeinde level in Germany and supplemented by studies of local politics in other countries, strives to illuminate local political habits. This discussion will provide a background against which to interpret the extensive electoral analysis in the following chapters.

The prime characteristic of Gemeinden are their large number and small size; thus, when we speak of local government we mean predominantly that of the smaller cities, towns, and villages. If we apply the formal criteria of size of community and density of population as distinguishing between rural and urban, most Gemeinden would be classified as rural.²⁴

Although these local units are increasingly exposed to outside influences, the significance of their structure and processes stems partially from the slowness with which local habits change.

Great resistance to change is undoubtedly one factor that makes for the high degree of similarity to be found in the local governmental activity and organization in various countries, in different sections of the same country, and in the same area at different times.²⁵

In this context, the political importance of the Gemeinde lies in its being the only level of government at which most people personally know the leaders and come in direct contact with the political institutions. The impact of local government is both tangible and immediate.

This local environment produces citizens who are better informed about local politics than national politics. For example, people possess high information levels about local political organizations as compared to national political organizations. One study revealed that three-fifths of German respondents were "informed" to some degree about local political organizations. At the same time, three-fifths of the same respondents demonstrated no information about national political organizations.²⁶

Political efficacy is also higher in respect to government at the local level. In Germany as in many other countries, people feel themselves better able to influence the outcome of local policy-making than of national policy-making. Sixty-two percent of the respondents in a nation-wide sample of Germans expressed a belief that they could exert an influence on local government; only 38 percent felt that they could exert a similar influence on government at the national level.²⁷ The powerlessness felt by many individuals with regard to their impact on national government does not hold true with respect to their feelings about local government. Since individuals know the local leaders and

institutions, they are able to perceive problems as more comprehensible and defined, to hold opinions of what should be done, and to have ideas of means to exert influence.

The accessibility of local officials and the intimacy of personal relationships in Gemeinde life are clearly revealed in a consideration of strategies of influence utilized by local citizens. In both the Almond and Verba and Pflaum studies, the respondents most often indicated their most viable political resource to be direct contact with local officials: 46 percent and 52.8 percent in the respective studies.²⁸

The role of political parties as mediating structures between the individual and his government in the local political process was overwhelmingly negated. Only 3 percent of the Almond and Verba sample said they would "work through a political party" in an attempt to influence local government; in the Pflaum study the corresponding figure was 6 percent.

Interestingly, these German findings are higher than those for other countries. Less than 1 percent of respondents in the United States, Great Britain, and Italy said that they would work through parties locally to exert influence.²⁹ Whatever their importance on the national level, political parties on the local level are often by-passed as sources of influence.

Since parties are seldom mentioned by local citizens as a means of influencing local policy-making, it is not surprising to report that parties are not seen as initiators of that policy-making, either.³⁰ The local council is viewed far more in terms of individual power holders than in terms of party governors. The public opinion poll

results presented in Table 4 illustrate the weak power position of political parties in Gemeinde politics.³¹

TABLE 4
PERCEPTION OF LOCUS OF LOCAL POWER BY SEX

| The Greatest Influence over Gemeinde Concerns Is Held by: | Men % | Women % |
|--|----------|------------|
| The <u>Gemeinde</u> council | 47.2 | 24.6 |
| The <u>Gemeinde</u> director | 27.0 | 23.1 |
| The mayor | 5.6 | 14.1 |
| The political parties (<u>Fraktionen</u>) | 11.2 | 2.6 |
| No opinion | 9.0 | 25.6 |
| | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| | N=89 | N=78 |

Source: Pflaum, p. 202.

The impotence of political parties may be related to the importance of communal personal relationships. A crucial difference in the style of local and national politics derives from the role of formal versus informal group memberships. In the Gemeinde informal groups center around certain individuals or local notables. The populace perceives certain individuals by virtue of their family background, job occupations, etc., to be the natural leaders or social actives of the community. The advice and help of these notables are sought by their neighbors in a wide variety of communal activities. As a consequence political leadership is not specialized, and political recruitment is determined upon the basis of personal characteristics.³²

To the extent that voters select local leaders primarily on grounds on their character and personality, parties are not vehicles for leadership. Supportive data for this proposition derive from field

research in Switzerland and France. Urs Jaeggi in his study of Swiss communes concluded that electoral candidates were not evaluated in terms of partisan affiliation. The most important campaign attributes were, instead, personal connections and general standing in the community.³³ Likewise, George Coddington found that a candidate's name was his greatest political asset in Swiss municipal elections. Many council members carried the names of the older families in the community and were generally re-elected for a number of successive terms in office.³⁴

The personal flavor of French local campaigns is also quite pervasive; e.g., interviews with small town mayors revealed that one criterion of candidate selection was his having a large family to vote for him.³⁵ In sum, a general characteristic of cross-national local elections are old family ties which lead to informal authority in communal affairs. Leadership in a political institution, the municipal council, is one aspect of a diffused social authority. Table 5 indicates the importance of personal attributes in the selection of local office holders in Germany.

TABLE 5
DETERMINANTS OF LOCAL VOTE BY SEX

| Deciding Factors in Determining My Vote Were: | Men | Women |
|--|--------|--------|
| | % | % |
| Party label | 16.3 | 11.1 |
| Christian ethics | 3.3 | 4.4 |
| Because knew candidate personally | 27.2 | 14.4 |
| Because he is a "good man" | 25.0 | 13.3 |
| Local interests | 10.9 | 4.4 |
| Standes and personal interests | 9.8 | 4.4 |
| (Nonvoters) | (32.1) | (58.2) |
| Multiple answers permitted | | |
| | N=96 | N=86 |

Source: Pflaum, p. 265.

The significance of personality and insignificance of party label is a noteworthy attribute of local voting behavior. Numerous surveys of federal elections demonstrate, in stark contrast, that very few electors cast their ballots on the basis of a candidate's personality. Survey data of the 1969 federal election campaign show that 62 percent of the electorate believed they should decide on the basis of "party slates of capable leaders" as compared to the 27 percent who believed they should decide on the basis of "Chancellor candidates."³⁶

Another method of evaluating the importance of a party label in federal elections is the analysis of first and second ballots. In 1969, 93.9 percent of the voters who cast their second ballot (party list) for the CDU voted for their CDU district candidate on the first ballot. The corresponding percentage of like SPD ballots was 94.7. Of CDU and SPD second ballots cast in 1965, 93.4 percent were identical to the party affiliation of the recipient of the first ballot. A very high percentage of voters thus cast both ballots for the same party.³⁷

The personal contact between local leaders and followers implies that the integrating functions performed by well-organized, technically efficient political parties in mass society are not as relevant to local electorates. Eighty percent of a sample of local voters knew personally the candidate for whom they voted.³⁸ In federal elections, on the other hand, a majority of voters did not know even the name of their district candidate. A national survey conducted in the same time period as the local survey cited above demonstrates the lack of familiarity of voters with candidates: only 36 percent of the voters who had already decided for a party in the 1953 election campaign

correctly named their party's candidate; of the undecided voters, only 21 percent correctly identified any candidate by name.³⁹

The personality factor combines with other Gemeinde norms to mitigate against the importance of local branches of national political parties. There exists a widespread belief that local government should be nonpolitical or non-partisan.⁴⁰ Political parties are often viewed as foreign bodies intruding upon the political will of the Gemeinde. When asked why they shy away from political parties, respondents give answers indicating distrust. "The parties have brought nothing but strife, war, and destruction to Germany."⁴¹ "I cannot foresee what good can come of parties."⁴² Thus, from a combination of factors, party organizations on the local level are viewed as superfluous. Efforts to recruit new party members are in general rebuffed, and party meetings are viewed as propaganda techniques.⁴³

To combat these factors the political parties strive to conform to local norms. Party election lists are often composed of nonparty members. Many party candidates stress their independence and their willingness to work for an unpartisan Gemeinde will. The propensity of candidates to stress their interest in the communal good and their freedom from party dictates is documented in Swiss local politics as well.⁴⁴ Correspondingly, many national parties in Norway show little interest in emphasizing partisan differences on the communal level.⁴⁵ As a reflection of the tendency to vote for a man "in spite of" his party label, German parties compete with each other to secure local notables to be on their election lists. Voters quite often state that a candidate would obtain an equal showing on an opposite party list.⁴⁶

Political party groups in the German Gemeinde as in other European communes direct their functions primarily toward local affairs.⁴⁷ With the exception of the SPD, most local parties have weak connections with higher party organizations.⁴⁸ The individuality of the parties' representatives as candidates and councilors remains dominant.

Resistance to partisan local government is supported by physical and attitudinal factors. The small size of Gemeinden enables personal relationships to remain determinants of political relationships. A long tradition of local autonomy reinforces the tendency to view political parties as foreign intruders upon the political will of the Gemeinde. Yet social actives to secure political office may adopt party labels, if only in a technical sense. The distinct style of local politics derives in large part from this synthesis of community norms with modern structures. The following section considers some of the more tangible effects of the local environment upon the political process. We turn from a consideration of the general settings of local politics to a consideration of the specific institutional settings of local electoral politics.

Local Electoral Systems

Generalizations about local electorates are much more problematic than are generalizations about national and state electorates. Supported by a basically proportional representational electoral system, the political parties have an absolute monopoly on representation in national and state elections. The character of alternatives presented to the voters is the same throughout Germany. In stark contrast, local

electorates face a wide range of alternatives which are not identical in every Gemeinde.

Local electoral systems are of two forms: plurality elections and proportional representational elections. If only one or no lists for the communal council are submitted, a plurality election occurs. Each voter may cast ballots for as many council members as to be elected. He may vote for the candidates on the ballot, or he may write in names. The persons with the most votes are elected, with the size of the Gemeinde determining the number of council seats to be filled. No label indicating political affiliation appears on the ballot.

If two or more lists are submitted, a proportional representational election results. The voter casts his ballot for one list. Seats are distributed among those lists obtaining at least 5 percent of the vote by the d'Hondt method of allocation.

A second important feature of communal election codes relates to the right of local voter groups to submit lists. Competition for control of local offices is thus not confined among political parties. Local voter groups are not political parties in the sense of Article 21 as interpreted by the Federal Constitutional Court.⁴⁹

The Saar, for instance, excluded local voter groups and individual candidates by adopting a communal electoral law whereby only parties in the sense of Article 21 could submit lists. However, in July 1960, the Federal Constitutional Court reversed this law. The court ruled that denial of the right to nomination by candidates other than those of political parties violated the principle of equal opportunity and

of the guarantees to local self-government.⁵⁰ Consequently, local voter groups have legal recognition in their right of candidate nomination in the local election laws of the states.

Local voter groups are of two kinds: permanent organizations with programs, known as Rathaus parties, which compete in successive elections, and looser organized voter groups which are formed for a specific election and disband thereafter. These local voter groups which compete in only one election are most characteristic of the small towns in which personal relationships are predominant.

Local voter groups are so strong in some states that the nationally organized political parties form a coalition to oppose them.⁵¹ Names such as the Citizens Union, the Free Voters Association, and the Independent Voter Group of (city's name) reflect the desire of the local voter groups to be "above" parties.⁵² These nonideological groups are concerned with preserving local amenities or with representing specific interests on the communal councils.⁵³

The style of electoral politics derives largely from the two local political phenomena of plurality elections and local voter groups. The choices available to the local voter vary tremendously according to the Gemeinde in which he lives. He may choose among individual candidates, among local voter groups, and political parties, or among political parties entirely. Even list alternatives of the political parties will be dissimilar among communities since no party runs in every Gemeinde. The alignment of forces influencing voting vary, in other words, not only with the level of government but among the same level as well.

In the next chapter, we will analyze the structured contexts of local electoral behavior in more quantitative terms. Our focus will be the difference in voter alternatives between levels of government. In successive chapters, we will then analyze the variations among Gemeinden in rates and directions of electoral change, with special reference to the party system.

Notes

¹G. Montagu Harris, Comparative Local Government (London: William Brendon & Sons, Ltd., 1948), p. 9.

²For a comprehensive survey of the historical development of German local government, see Erich Becker, "Entwicklung der deutschen Gemeinden und Gemeindeverbaende im Hinblick auf die Gegenwart," in Handbuch der kommunalen Wissenschaft und Praxis, Vol. I: Kommunalverfassung, ed. by Hans Peters (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1956), pp. 62-112.

³See Ernst Utzinger, Die freie politische Gemeinde in der Schweiz und im Ausland (Zurich: Scientia-Verlag, 1946), pp. 54-60. See also Becker, pp. 77-83.

⁴Becker, pp. 100-101.

⁵See Arnold J. Heidenheimer, The Governments of Germany (3rd ed.; New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1971), p. 203. See also Litchfield and Associates, p. 60.

⁶Litchfield and Associates, p. 58.

⁷Roger H. Wells, The States in West German Federalism (New York: Bookman Associates, 1961), p. 75.

⁸Appendix A contains excerpted articles from the Constitution of Rhineland-Palatinate that pertain to the rights of local self-government.

⁹A legal discussion of the relationship of the Gemeinde to the national government is presented in Arnold Koettgen, Die Gemeinde und der Bundesgesetzgeber (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer GmbH, 1957).

¹⁰Germany, Statistisches Bundesamt, Statistisches Jahrbuch fuer die Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1970 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer GmbH, 1970), p. 34.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Appendix B presents a summary of local election laws by states.

¹³See Arnold Koettgen, "Wesen und Rechtsform der Gemeinden und Gemeindeverbaende," in Peters, ed., pp. 185-234.

¹⁴In towns of less than 100 inhabitants in Hesse and Lower Saxony, a Gemeindeversammlung (town meeting) replaces the elected communal council.

- 15 See Heidenheimer, The Governments of Germany, p. 104, and Koettgen, "Wesen und Rechtsform der Gemeinden," pp. 199-205.
- 16 Thomas Ellwein, Das Regierungssystem der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Cologne: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1965), p. 40. See also Hans Peters, ed., Handbuch der kommunalen Wissenschaft und Praxis, Vol. II: Kommunale Verwaltung (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1957).
- 17 Rhineland-Palatinate, Statistik von Rhineland-Pfalz, Band III: Gemeindestatistik Rheinland-Pfalz 1960/1961, Teil V: Gemeindefinanzen (Bad Ems: Statistisches Landesamt, 1962), p. 11.
- 18 The average city depends on state subsidies for approximately 20 percent of its budget. The financial position of cities was strengthened in the Finance Reform of 1965 whereby cities may claim specified amounts of certain state income and business taxes. Heidenheimer, The Governments of Germany, pp. 199, 205.
- 19 Arthur B. Gunlicks, Representative and Party at the Local Level in Western Germany: The Case of Lower Saxony (Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University, 1967), p. 105.
- 20 Only 139 of the Gemeinden had Stadtkreis status in 1961. Germany, Statistisches Bundesamt, Ämliches Gemeindeverzeichnis fuer die Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer GmbH, 1963), p. 11.
- 21 Wells, p. 76.
- 22 Jacob, p. 189.
- 23 Rene Koenig, "Die Gemeinde im Blickfeld der Soziologie," in Peters, ed., Kommunalverfassung, p. 50.
- 24 Discussions of the significance of the terms rural and urban are presented in Richard Dewey, "The Rural-Urban Continuum: Real but Relatively Unimportant," The American Journal of Sociology, LXVII, No. 1 (July, 1960), 60-66, and T. Lynn Smith and Paul E. Zopf, Jr., Principles of Inductive Rural Sociology (Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Co., 1970), pp. 8-35.
- 25 Smith and Zopf, pp. 367-368.
- 26 Renate Pflaum, "Politische Fuehrung und politische Beteiligung als Ausdruck gemeindlicher Selbstgestaltung," in Das Dorf im Spannungsfeld industrieller Entwicklung, ed. by Gerhard Wurzbacher and Renate Pflaum (Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke Verlag, 1954), p. 260.
- 27 Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1965), pp. 142-143.
- 28 Almond and Verba, p. 158; Pflaum, p. 261.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Pflaum, pp. 261, 275.

³¹The low influence profile of the mayor is in contrast to findings about French and Swiss local politics. See Kesselman, pp. 38-52 and Urs Jaeggi, Berggemeinden im Wandel (Bern: Verlag Paul Haupt, 1965), p. 225.

³²Communal research indicates the most important aspects of personality to be: "christian ethics, helpfulness, diligence, sense of duty, good family background." Pflaum, p. 267.

³³Jaeggi, p. 73.

³⁴George Coddington, Jr., Governing the Commune of Vevrier: Politics in Swiss Local Government (Boulder: Bureau of Governmental Research of the University of Colorado, 1967), pp. 40-41.

³⁵Sidney Tarrow, "The Urban-Rural Cleavage in Political Involvement: The Case of France," The American Political Science Review, LXV, No. 2 (June, 1971), 356.

³⁶Heidenheimer, The Governments of Gerrmany, pp. 131-132.

³⁷For the percentage of like ballots in the 1957 and 1961 elections, see Rodney Stierbold, "The Significance of Void Ballots in West German Elections," The American Political Science Review, LIX, No. 2 (June, 1965), 398. For comparative 1953 percentages, see Hirsch-Weber and Schuetz, p. 314.

³⁸Pflaum, p. 265.

³⁹Hirsch-Weber and Schuetz, p. 300.

⁴⁰See Gunlicks, 18-22, 124-126; Pflaum, pp. 256-257, 265; and Werner Grundmann, Die Rathausparteien (Goettingen: Verlag Otto Schwarz & Company, 1960), pp. 92-94.

⁴¹Arthur B. Gunlicks, "Intraparty Democracy in Western Germany," Comparative Politics, II, No. 2 (January, 1970), 235-236.

⁴²Pflaum, p. 258. This belief in the negative worth of political parties is not confined solely to the level of local government. See Wolfgang Hartenstein and Klaus Liepelt, "Party Members and Party Voters in West Germany," Acta Sociologica, VI, Nos. 1-2 (1962), 44; and Lewis J. Edinger, Politics in Germany (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1968), pp. 98-100, 284-285.

⁴³See Pflaum, pp. 257-258, and Gunlicks, "Intraparty Democracy," pp. 235-236.

⁴⁴Codding, pp. 28-32, and Jaeggi, p. 77.

⁴⁵Stein Rokkan and Henry Valen, "The Mobilization of the Periphery: Data on Turnout, Party Membership and Candidate Recruitment in Norway," in Rokkan et al., p. 192.

⁴⁶See Grundmann, p. 9, and Pflaum, pp. 266-267, 271.

⁴⁷National parties emphasize local concerns and deemphasize party differences in Swiss local electoral campaigns. Codding, p. 23.

⁴⁸See Pflaum, p. 278, and Gunlicks, Representative and Party, p. 238. For the same tendency in Norway, see Rokkan and Valen, "The Mobilization of the Periphery," p. 197.

⁴⁹Article 21 explicitly recognizes the role of political parties to "participate in forming the political will of the people." U. S. Department of State, The Bonn Constitution: Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1949), p. 3.

⁵⁰Gunlicks, Representative and Party, p. 91.

⁵¹Grundmann, pp. 2-3.

⁵²Ibid., pp. 17-19.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 8-9.

CHAPTER III

ELECTORAL POLITICS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

In the preceding chapters, we considered those aspects of the German political system and of the political culture that are most directly related to electoral politics at the local level of government. We sought to delineate the two foci of our study, the party system and the Gemeinde, by distinguishing their major characteristics. Before beginning our statistical analyses of local electoral behavior, one additional step is needed. A short summary of the socio-economic and political characteristics of Rhineland-Palatinate will complete our description of the contextual background of local elections.

Rhineland-Palatinate

The state of Rhineland-Palatinate is a postwar creation whose boundaries contain the southern section of the historic Prussian Rhine province and a group of territorial fragments including parts of Hesse and Hesse-Nassau and the Bavarian Palatine. It is, accordingly, the most heterogeneous of the ten German states. Because of the lack of historical and economic unity in Rhineland-Palatinate, a committee appointed by the Bundestag recommended revision of Land boundaries in 1955. However, since all the recommendations involved territorial change controversial to other states, no change has been made.¹

Rhineland-Palatinate is bordered by Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Saar on the west. North Rhine-Westphalia lies to the north and across

the Rhine River to the east is Hesse. Its southern section is bounded by France on the west and by Baden-Wuerttemberg on the east. During the allied occupation, the state was in the French zone.

In terms of land area, Rhineland-Palatinate with 19,378 kilometers of territory is one of the small German states.² Only Schleswig-Holstein, Saar, and the city-states are smaller. In size of population, it too belongs to the small German states occupying sixth place in rank: resident population in 1969 was 3,569,000 people.³ Unlike its eastern neighbor, Hesse, which is only slightly larger in area, Rhineland-Palatinate has a low population density: 184 inhabitants per kilometer in 1969 (national average: 245).⁴ In general the state is sparsely populated, but the aggregate statistics do not adequately portray the diversity within its boundaries.

The administrative districts composing the northern-central section of the state, Koblenz and Trier, have population densities of 166 and 100 inhabitants per kilometer, respectively. Yet to the south, the Rhine Hess-Palatinate district with 266 inhabitants per kilometer has a more dense population structure than the national average.⁵ The two largest cities, Mainz and Ludwigshafen, lie in this area as well as five cities with populations over 40,000.⁶ The Rhine Hess-Palatinate area includes practically all of the towns of any size within the state. In contrast, Koblenz and Trier are the sole large cities in their respective districts. A larger proportion of the population thus resides in small towns in Rhineland-Palatinate than in Germany as a whole. Only four cities in 1969--the ones named

above--had populations of more than 100,000 inhabitants (national total of cities over 100,000 inhabitants: 59).⁷

In terms of religious composition, the southern sector of the state is again atypical. The Catholic population falls under 50 percent here while in the other sectors it approximates 70 percent. The state average of 56 percent Catholic places Rhineland-Palatinate as one of the most Catholic German states (national average of Catholic population: 44.5 percent).⁸

The absorption of refugees, a problem for some states, has not been a factor in the political and economic integration of Rhineland-Palatinate. Percentage of refugees in the state population is 7.5 percent (national average: 15.3 percent).⁹

The weak industrial base of the state is partially reflected in its relative low Gross National Product (GNP) in Deutsche Mark per inhabitant: 7,445 (national average: 8,790).¹⁰ Only two states, Schleswig-Holstein and the Saar, have a lower per inhabitant GNP. Tables 6 and 7, which give the percentages of economically active persons in various sectors of the economy and by employment status, demonstrate the character of Rhineland-Palatinate's economy.

The agrarian nature of the economy is clearly apparent. The number of workers engaged in agricultural occupations and the number of assisting family members are much higher than the national averages. Correspondingly, production industries are not as important a sector of the economy in Rhineland-Palatinate as in other German states, nor do salaried employees and civil servants comprise as high a proportion of the labor force. That such a large proportion of the population

TABLE 6

MEAN PERCENTAGE OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE
PERSONS BY SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY, 1967

| Sector | Rhineland-Palatinate | Germany |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---------|
| | % | % |
| Agriculture ^a | 17.7 | 10.3 |
| Production | 43.0 | 47.9 |
| Trade | 16.2 | 18.1 |
| Services | 23.2 | 23.7 |
| | 100.1 ^b | 100.0 |
| Total (in 1000's) | 1,543 | 25,906 |

^aIncludes forestry, animal raising, and fisheries.

^bRounding error.

Source: Germany, Statistisches Bundesamt, Statistisches Jahrbuch fuer die Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1968 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer GmbH, 1968), p. 128.

TABLE 7

MEAN PERCENTAGE OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE
PERSONS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, 1967

| Status | Rhineland-Palatinate | Germany |
|--|----------------------|---------|
| | % | % |
| Self-employed | 13.7 | 11.4 |
| Assisting family members | 13.6 | 8.0 |
| Salaried employees and civil servants | 29.2 | 33.2 |
| Workers | 43.5 | 47.4 |
| | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Total (in 1000's) | 1,543 | 25,906 |

Source: Statistisches Jahrbuch, 1968, p. 128.

seeks its livelihood in agriculture is not surprising once we note the geographical position of Rhineland-Palatinate. Both the Rhine and Mosel wine districts lie partially within the state, and the wine industry plays a very important economic role.

The small town, agrarian, Catholic composition of the state is quite relevant to a description of the political history of Rhineland-Palatinate: dominance by parties of the right. The Christian Democrats have been in state power for more than two decades. Their tenure in office, albeit with their junior coalition partner, the Free Democrats, has been uninterrupted throughout the postwar period. The Social Democrats have never come close to challenging the CDU leadership. In the 1947-1967 state elections, the CDU has led over the SPD by an average 10 percent of the votes (45.4 percent to 35.4 percent, respectively).¹¹

In terms of national electoral behavior, the picture of CDU strength and SPD weakness is even sharper. The mean vote for the CDU in the 1949-1969 national elections was 50.2 percent as compared to 32.8 percent for the SPD. How safe the state of Rhineland-Palatinate is for the CDU is noted by observing that the state mean has surpassed the national mean by six percentage points in the 1949-1969 time period. In contrast, the SPD obtained 40 percent of the vote for the first time in the 1969 election.

The FDP has been stronger in Rhineland-Palatinate than in the nation generally. It has averaged 11 percent of the vote in both the state and national postwar elections. Minor parties have been negligible factors in state and national politics in Rhineland-Palatinate. The largest

minor party in the early period, the Communist Party (KPD) received 8.7 percent of the votes in the first state election of 1947 and 6.2 percent of the votes in the first state election of 1947 and 6.2 percent of the vote in the first federal election of 1949. Its power declined in successive elections before it was banned in 1956.

Most recently the National Democratic Party (NPD) has been the sole other third party to surmount the . 5 percent barrier for representation in state elections. With 6.9 percent of the 1967 state electoral vote, the NPD received four Landtag seats. Although its vote receded in the 1969 national elections, the NPD received 5 percent of the vote in the Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse, Bavaria, and the Saar.

The party system in Rhineland-Palatinate differs from the national party system in one important respect--exclusion of the SPD as a viable opponent. The preeminence of the CDU may, in turn, be related to the demographic composition of the state. Rhineland-Palatinate is one of the less economically developed German states with an unusually high Catholic population. An examination of municipal election returns, however, will show the extent to which political parties and voting behavior on the local level diverge from national and state tendencies.

The Local Environment

The survey research data discussed in Chapter II indicated two important features of Gemeinde life: the personalistic style of politics and the prevalence of nonpartisan political orientations. We maintain that this local environment is of the utmost relevance

for understanding the development of the party system. That the local community has observable effects upon the electoral process has been well documented by students of American politics.

Illustrative of these findings is the "breakage effect" hypothesis: other factors being equal, people tend to vote in the way supported by the climate of opinion in their home community.¹² Distinctive communal political traditions may thus show persistent continuity over time. The way the community influences political behavior may be explained in several ways.

Angus Campbell proposes that community influence derives from the motivation of community members to conform to perceived community norms. In other words, the community itself is a reference group.¹³ Robert Putnam advances an alternative explanation. His "social interaction" theory proposes that "community influence is mediated primarily through the numerous personal contacts among members of a community."¹⁴ Thus even if voters are unaware of communal norms, they may still be influenced by their communal environment. A resident's psychological attachment to his community or a resident's social involvement in his community may act as translators of the climate of opinion in a community.

These findings have broad implications. 1) Local political activists come under strong influence to adopt the attitudes of the majority community opinion (e.g., nonpartisanship in the case of local German voters).¹⁵ 2) The resistance of closely knit community (e.g., the small Gemeinde) to change will be greater than the resistance of an atomistic community.¹⁶ 3) Residence in the local

community may serve as a functional substitute for other means (e.g., the political party) of integrating individuals into the political system.¹⁷ The applicability of these implications to German local electoral behavior is suggested by the statistical data gathered for the Rhineland-Palatinate elections.

Types of Electoral Contests

The very forms of electoral struggle reflect significant local resistance to partisan conflict. Since plurality elections, by definition, are noncompetitive, a prerequisite to partisan politics is the existence of proportional representational electoral systems.¹⁸ Yet approximately one-half of the Gemeinden hold plurality elections. Examinations of voting statistics from the six communal elections in the postwar period demonstrate the remarkable entrenchment of plurality contests (Table 8).

TABLE 8
TYPE OF LOCAL ELECTION BY GEMEINDE

| Year | Plurality | Elections | PR Elections | | Total | Elections |
|------|-----------|-----------|--------------|------|-------|-----------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| 1948 | 1751 | 60.0 | 1162 | 40.0 | 2913 | 100.0 |
| 1952 | 1272 | 43.6 | 1642 | 56.4 | 2914 | 100.0 |
| 1956 | 1389 | 47.6 | 1527 | 52.4 | 2916 | 100.0 |
| 1960 | 1531 | 53.5 | 1385 | 47.4 | 2916 | 100.0 |
| 1964 | 1487 | 51.0 | 1431 | 49.0 | 2918 | 100.0 |
| 1969 | 1366 | 52.7 | 1225 | 47.3 | 2591 | 100.0 |

Noncontested elections bear out the importance of a personalistic style of politics where certain individuals are believed to be the

natural communal leaders. Electoral contests in such Gemeinde affirm the distinctiveness of the community by institutionalizing informal roles and mores in a political setting.

This peculiarity of local electoral politics has roots in the subjective environment of local voters. The slowness with which local political habits change is reinforced by the cultural norm of preference for harmony against fractionalization. The ability of a commune to suppress electoral divisions is related to a pervasive social attitude: resistance to change if occasioned by conflict. Harmony in preference to social conflict is a widespread idea in German society.¹⁹ The local setting possesses physical and socio-cultural attributes that foster a creation of local harmony.

Complementing this idea of consensus is the feeling that politics is the business of "experts." The preeminence of local notables is reinforced by a cultural stress on the virtue of authority. A long tradition of civic and social leadership by these notables checks the intrusion of more specialized political leadership. Plurality elections thus avoid conflict at the same time as they reinforce communal autonomy. The local consensus precludes the necessity of local electoral competition and conflict.

In this regard, German local politics closely parallel French local politics. Kesselman's research on France suggests some of the ways in which local consensus is maintained and fostered. Efforts to ensure that electoral cleavages do not erode the local

consensus often result in a single electoral list. Careful planning through informal processes is reflected in the electoral list being a microcosm of the alignment of local political forces.²⁰ Thus, local electoral opposition is avoided, and the sharp cleavages which divide local electorates in national elections do not emerge in local elections.

The most important French local office-holder, the mayor, is the prime initiator of fostering communal harmony. The mayor, a local notable par excellence, combines high social status and political power. He acts as the "communal father" and maintains solidarity on local issues through his great prestige.²¹

The Gemeinden with no developed organizations for electoral competition are overwhelmingly the small villages with under 3,000 inhabitants; however, approximately 50 percent of the population resides in these small locales.²² Whether we refer to the number of local governmental units or to the attitudes of the population residing in such units, local politics is very often characterized by the avoidance of electoral conflict. The endurance of local political habits in the midst of the rapid and significant change in postwar Germany testifies to the influence of the local community as a force on voting behavior.

Withdrawal from political competition is not a characteristic of the half of the Gemeinden which have PR elections. In these local elections where political parties are present, we might expect local electoral patterns to reflect national electoral patterns. Since organized political groups are a necessity for PR

elections, political parties as special institutions organized for electoral struggle would assume a dominant position. An analysis of municipal elections reveals, however, that localistic influences are still very pervasive in the PR elections. Contrary to being absorbed by the political parties, local voter groups show amazing perseverance as electoral competitors. Their share of local votes has, in fact, increased over the years as Table 9 demonstrates.

TABLE 9
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VOTE
OBTAINED BY LOCAL VOTER GROUPS

| 1948 | 1952 | 1956 | 1960 | 1964 | 1969 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 16.7 | 33.6 | 31.9 | 25.9 | 25.8 | 25.9 |

With the exception of the first election in 1948, local voter groups have obtained at least one-fourth of the vote in every election. The consistency of this vote seems to imply that local voter groups are quite firmly entrenched.

The extreme activeness of local voter groups is apparent when we compare the number of nomination lists submitted by local voter groups and by political parties (Table 10). Local voter groups submit approximately three times the number of lists as all political parties combined.

TABLE 10
CHARACTER OF LOCAL ELECTION LISTS

| | 1948 ^a | 1952 | 1956 | 1960 | 1960 | 1969 |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | # | # | # | # | # | # |
| Local voter group lists | 1295 | 3983 | 4078 | 3302 | 3564 | 3092 |
| Political party lists | <u>1738</u> | <u>1520</u> | <u>1232</u> | <u>1361</u> | <u>1439</u> | <u>1287</u> |
| Total lists | 3033 | 5503 | 5310 | 4663 | 5003 | 4379 |

^aNumber of total lists was not available; statistics are for lists in FR elections only.

Since around one-half of the elections in any one year are plurality contests, a high degree of competition is indicated in the FR elections. The distribution of lists in the 1952 elections, in which local voter group lists formed 72 percent of the total lists submitted, is indicative of the number of local groups entering the elections (Table 11).

TABLE 11
DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL ELECTION LISTS
IN FR ELECTIONS BY GEMEINDE

| Number of Gemeinden | with 2 lists | with 3 lists | with 4 lists | with 5 lists | with 6 + lists |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1642 | 700 | 477 | 276 | 123 | 66 |
| 100.0% | 42.6 | 29.0 | 16.8 | 7.5 | 4.1 |

Electoral competition is not confined to partisan politics. The increase in local voter group lists and the decrease in political

party lists as shown in Table 10 is symptomatic of continuing local resistance to partisan conflict.

The Electoral Position of Political Parties

Political parties have been unable to make any significant inroads into local elections over a twenty-one-year period. As Table 12 shows, political parties actually contested more elections in 1948 than in 1969. The local activeness of political parties in the first election conforms to general tendencies. The role of political parties in satisfying material needs and self-interest was highest in the immediate postwar years. In the 1950's as normalization of personal lives occurred, a trend away from political involvement toward privacy arose.²³

TABLE 12
PERCENTAGE OF LOCAL ELECTIONS IN
WHICH POLITICAL PARTIES PARTICIPATED

| Party | 1952 | 1956 | 1960 | 1964 | 1969 |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CDU | 24.1 | 20.9 | 22.2 | 22.7 | 20.8 |
| SPD | 18.9 | 17.6 | 19.8 | 21.6 | 23.4 |
| FDP | 3.0 | 3.1 | 4.3 | 4.8 | 5.1 |
| KPD | 5.2 | .. | .. | .. | .. |

Political parties compete in less than one-fourth of the local contests.²⁴ List of minor parties are negligible in local elections. The FDP is the only party to consistently contest more elections in successive years, but it still plays a very minor role in local politics. The number of electoral lists of the CDU has declined

while the number of SPD lists has increased. These trends may be related to the local organizational strategies of the parties.

The founding initiative for local CDU organizations was from religious persons whose main interest was "Rettung der Gemeinde."²⁵ Their efforts, in other words, derived from Gemeinde interests and not from a preconceived party position. Officials from upper level CDU party organizations did not come into the communes until later. In fact, as the CDU developed into a more defined party politically, local difficulties arose. Many communal leaders who were interested in Gemeinde concerns but wished to remain politically neutral withdrew.

In contrast, from the beginning local SPD organizations were in close contact with higher level officials. There were reciprocal meetings between communal, county, and higher level party officials. A relatively tight organization was characteristic of the SPD down to the local level.²⁶

The distribution of political party lists is closely related to the distribution of the electoral strength of the political parties (Table 13). Political parties were strongest in the 1948 election. After a loss of 11 percent of the total vote in 1952, parties have steadily made a very slow rise which, nonetheless, has yet to equal their first electoral showing. The partisan gains derive mainly from the increase in the SPD vote since the CDU and FDP have not regained their 1948 levels.²⁷ The local positions of the CDU and SPD are thus reversed from their state and national electoral positions in Rhineland-Palatinate.

TABLE 13

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VOTE OBTAINED BY
POLITICAL PARTIES IN LOCAL ELECTIONS

| Year | CDU | SPD | FDP | Other | Total Party Vote |
|------|------|------|-----|-------|------------------|
| 1948 | 26.2 | 25.2 | 5.3 | 5.6 | 62.3 |
| 1952 | 20.7 | 22.6 | 5.1 | 2.9 | 51.9 |
| 1956 | 22.1 | 26.4 | 4.1 | .5 | 53.1 |
| 1960 | 25.5 | 26.1 | 5.1 | .4 | 57.1 |
| 1964 | 25.6 | 29.5 | 4.1 | .1 | 59.3 |
| 1969 | 26.0 | 29.4 | 4.0 | 1.1 | 60.5 |

Within the boundaries of partisan politics is a dominant two party system. The CDU and SPD contest the most elections and obtain the great majority of partisan votes. This development is far less dramatic in local than in national and state elections. The combined strength of the CDU and SPD increased by only four percentage points from 1948 to 1969, 51.4 percent to 55.4 percent, respectively. Unlike their national and state tendencies the CDU and SPD have not benefited from the decline of minority parties. Such parties have never been a factor in local elections. Figure 1 shows the comparative combined strength of the CDU and SPD at the various levels of electoral politics. The gap between local and national or state strength has increased over the years so that in 1969 the CDU and SPD obtained one-third more of the vote in that national election than in the local election. Local electorates do not divide in the same way as do national and state electorates. Competition for voters occurs not so much between the parties as between political parties and local voter groups.

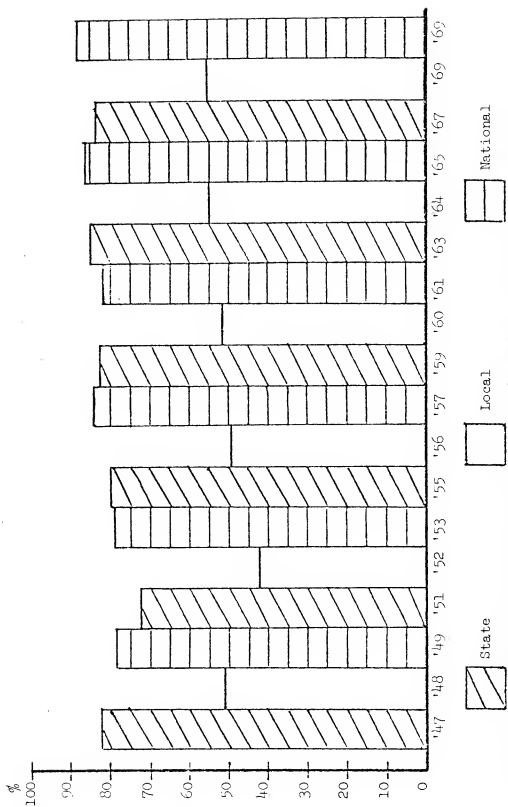


Figure 1. Combined Strength of CDU and SPD, 1947-1969, in Percent of Total Vote

The weakness of national political parties in local elections is a noteworthy attribute of local politics in several other European countries as well. Small town French local elections are distinguished by their lack of competitive party lists. Of particular interest is the extremely weak local position of the Gaullist party. It obtained 41 percent of the deputy seats in the 1967 national elections as compared to a mere 9 percent of the municipal council seats in the 1965 local elections.²⁸

Although Norwegian local elections are highly politicized in comparison with German or French local elections, no national party competes in all communes. Nonpartisan lists appeared on approximately two-fifths of local electoral ballots in 1963.²⁹ The Labor party ran in a high 90 percent of the 1967 local elections, but the figures were much lower for the non-Socialist parties.³⁰

In Switzerland one-half of the twenty-four communes under a PR electoral system have at least one purely communal party in local elections in addition to national parties.³¹ The most striking contrast between electoral levels is the lesser number of active parties at the communal level.³² Other differences between Swiss national and local elections are manifested in the weakness of important national parties locally, and likewise, the local strength of declining national parties.

In speaking of German local elections, the important question concerns not the development of a two party system but the more general question of the development of a party system. Since political parties obtain only slightly over one-half of the local

vote, a huge reservoir of unmobilized partisan voters remains.

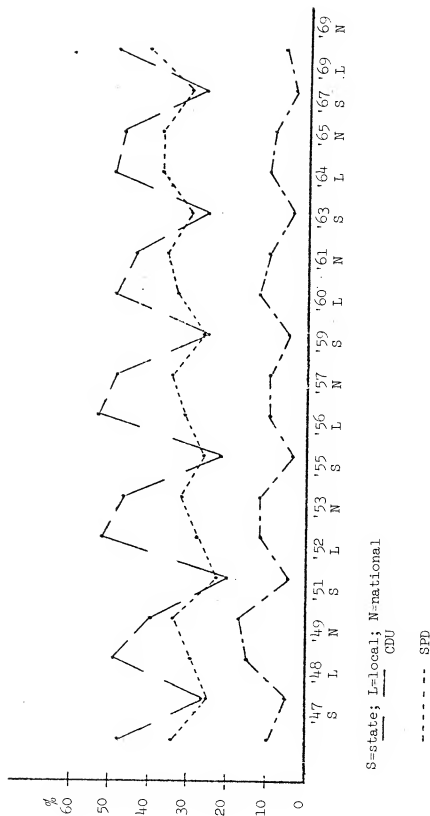
Local electorates demonstrate amazing continuity in keeping political parties out of local politics.

During a twenty-one-year period, these electorates consistently maintained their nonpartisanship through plurality elections and through local voter group lists in PR elections. The dramatic fluctuations in terms of party strength among levels of government is demonstrated in Figure 2.

The Governmental Position of Political Parties

The circumscription in the role of political parties at the grass-roots level of the German political system is even greater in terms of local holders of power than in terms of competitors for power. Structurally, the Gemeinde has a high proportion of formal political roles. In 1964, the ratio of local council members to the total electorate was 1:82. In contrast, the ratios for Landtag and Bundestag deputies were 1:2,363 and 1:76,226, respectively. The numerous local openings for direct political participation have the potential of demonstrating more clearly the desires of the populace and the trends those desires may exhibit. Most importantly, perhaps, they enhance the possibility for direct contact between leaders and followers.

Personal relationships assume a vital role in the operations of local governmental institutions. These features are magnified in small Gemeinde through the allocation of council seats. The proportion of seats allocated to Gemeinde of increasing size is smaller than the proportional increase in the number of inhabitants. At one end of



S=state; L=local; N=national
 ——— CDU
 - - - - - SPD
 FDP

Figure 2. Percentage of Total Vote Obtained by Major Parties, 1947-1969

the continuum, a tiny village may elect one council member for every twenty voters. At the opposite end of the continuum, a large city may elect one council member for every 350 voters.³³

This scheme of allocation results in vote-seat discrepancies to the detriment of political parties. Consequences of electoral systems are reversed at the national and local levels. In national elections, the major parties usually reap a larger proportion of Bundestag seats than their votes because of the 5 percent clause. Parties obtaining less than this percent of the vote do not share in the allocation of seats. These surplus seats fall mainly to the CDU/CSU and SPD. The CDU/CSU's and SPD's percentages of seats over their percentages of votes averaged 3.4 percent and 2.3 percent, respectively in the 1949-1969 elections.³⁴

In local elections the major parties do not achieve the number of council seats that their share of total votes would indicate because of the numerous small towns with no partisan candidates. For instance in 1964, partisans occupied barely one-fourth of the total number of local council seats. Independent candidates held two-fifths of the seats, and local voter groups representatives held another one-third. Table 14 presents the distribution of local council seats by affiliation of councilors.

The number of seats occupied is a relevant factor in the discussion of party strength in that the aim of political parties in electoral contests is to win power. As illustrated in Table 14, the nonpartisan character of local politics is more noticeable in the structure of government, i.e., percent of local councilors, than in the structure of electoral competition, i.e., percent of total vote.

TABLE 14
DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL COUNCIL SEATS AS
CONTRASTED TO DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL VOTE, 1964

| | CDU | SPD | FDP | Other parties | Voter groups | Inde- pendents | Total ^a |
|----------|------|------|-----|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Seats, % | 12.8 | 12.1 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 35.3 | 38.8 | 100.0 |
| Votes, % | 25.6 | 29.5 | 4.1 | .1 | 25.8 | 14.8 | 100.0 |

^aTotal number of seats=28,854; total number of voters=2,363,000.

Local Electorates in Perspective

In our discussion of local elections, we have thus far omitted any mention of voter participation. An avoidance of politics in the sense of partisan involvement could possibly be one dimension of withdrawal from political activity in a more general sense. Yet citizen involvement in politics as measured by the act of voting is rather high. Although somewhat lower than in national elections, voter participation in local elections is, in fact, generally higher than in state elections as Figure 3 demonstrates. Interest in local concerns is sufficient to mobilize voters in the absence of either partisan conflict or of anticipated closeness of an election.

Our examination of local electoral behavior confirms the accuracy of the responses to the survey analysis discussed in the previous chapter. People believe that communal tasks may be performed without the intervention of political parties. High interest in local government is reflected in voter participation and in the numerous local voter group lists.

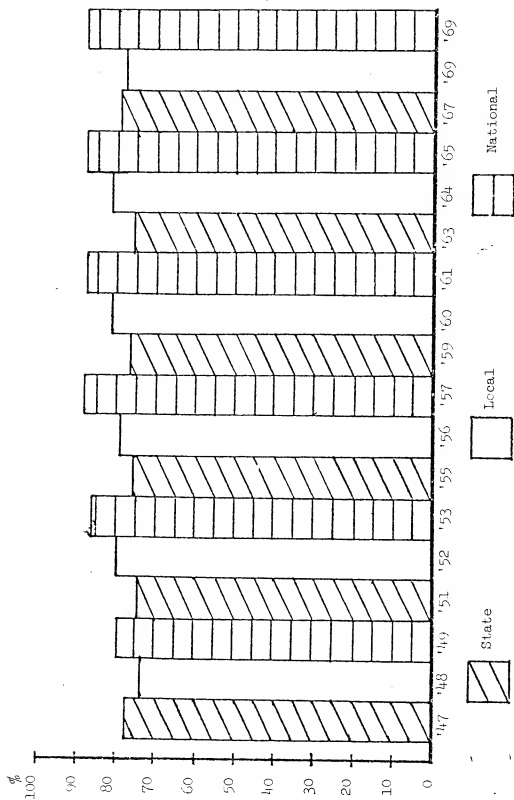


Figure 3. Voter Turnout, 1947-1969

The specific style of electoral politics is related to the size of the commune. The smallest villages maintain communal autonomy and consensus by rejecting any form of electoral conflict. Elections affirm the informal selection of communal leaders. The larger towns, in contrast, have quite competitive electoral contests to choose their governmental officials. This competition is conducted largely through local voter groups. In short, the interest in and the competitiveness of local electoral politics occur to a great extent without partisan politics.

The nonpartisanship of German local elections should not be confused with the American phenomenon of nonpartisan municipal elections. The contexts set by the electoral systems are quite different. The role of political parties is legally recognized and encouraged through the local electoral laws in Germany. The presence of political parties, in other words, is expected in German municipal elections rather than discouraged.

Yet the long histories and traditions of self-government, the prominence of personal relationships, the discrediting of political parties as troublemakers to local harmony and as intruders upon local autonomy combine to produce the distinct impact of local political habits upon the electoral process. The Gemeinde possesses many characteristics to set it apart as an independent constituency. In such a context there is no easy projection of national political party organizations into local politics nor any automatic transfer of national and state electoral loyalties.

The preceding analysis constitutes the preliminary step in our study of local electoral politics. Since we are especially interested

in determining the sources of change in party systems, we must proceed further to determine local conditions that are most conducive to partisan conflict. Through an examination of the social, political, and economic differences in Gemeinden, we may determine the relationship of varying structured contexts of electoral behavior to the party system. Our perspective changes from analyzing the Gemeinden as an entity distinct from national system characteristics to a perspective of analyzing the variation among Gemeinden in rates and directions of electoral change.

Notes

¹Richard Hiscocks, Democracy in Western Germany (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 153-154.

²Germany, Federal Statistical Office, Handbook of Statistics for the Federal Republic of Germany (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer GmbH, 1970), p. 16.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Statistisches Jahrbuch, 1970, p. 28.

⁷Ibid., p. 34.

⁸Ibid., p. 39.

⁹Handbook of Statistics, p. 21.

¹⁰Statistisches Jahrbuch, 1970, p. 495.

¹¹Based upon official publications of Rhineland-Palatinate, Statistisches Landesamt, Bad Ems. The results of the eighteen postwar elections discussed in this chapter are contained in the series, Statistik von Rheinland-Pfalz. The reader is referred to the bibliography for a full description of individual volumes.

¹²Bernard R. Berelson et al., Voting (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1954), pp. 98-101.

¹³Angus Campbell, "The Political Implications of Community Identification," in Approaches to the Study of Politics, ed. by Roland Young (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1958), pp. 318-328.

¹⁴Robert D. Putnam, "Political Attitudes and the Local Community," The American Political Science Review, LX, No. 3 (September, 1966), 641.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 653.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷For a discussion of this proposition, see David R. Segal and Marshall W. Meyer, "The Social Context of Political Participation," in Quantitative Ecological Analyses in the Social Sciences, ed. by Mattei Dogan and Stein Rokkan (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1969), pp. 217-232.

¹⁸If the council seats were contested, there would be two lists submitted, and a PR election would result.

¹⁹Ralf Dahrendorf, "The New Germanies: Restoration, Revolution, Reconstruction," in Lijphart, ed., p. 236.

²⁰Kesselman, pp. 119-135.

²¹Ibid., pp. 38ff.

²²In 1961, 48.3 percent of the population of Rhineland-Palatinate lived in towns of 3,000 or less inhabitants. Ämtliches Gemeindeverzeichnis, pp. 68-69.

²³Hartenstein and Liepelt, pp. 46-47. See also Sidney Verba, "Germany: The Remaking of a Political Culture," in Political Culture and Political Development, ed. by Lucian Pye and Sidney Verba (Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 164.

²⁴Statistics were not available for the 1948 elections.

²⁵Pflaum, p. 254.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 253-254.

²⁷The FDP shows considerable local strength in some other states. For instance, the party polled 32.4 percent of the vote in the 1952 local elections as compared to only 15.8 percent of the 1953 Bundestag vote in the same villages in North Rhine-Westphalia. Pflaum, p. 271.

²⁸Kesselman, p. 101.

²⁹Rokkan, "Electoral Mobilization," p. 251.

³⁰Henry Valen, "Norway: The 1967 Local Elections," in Scandinavian Political Studies, Vol. III, 1968, ed. by Per Torsvik (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), p. 238.

³¹Coddling, p. 31.

³²Coddling, pp. 25-26, and Jaeggi, pp. 75-77.

³³The allocation of council seats by size of Gemeinde is given in Appendix C.

³⁴Conradt, "Electoral Law Politics," p. 343.

CHAPTER IV

THE POLITICIZATION OF LOCAL ELECTIONS

The varying forms of electoral politics in the national and local arenas suggest different research strategies. Since the party system constitutes a "given" in national voting behavior, research concentrates primarily on analyzing changes in voter support among the established parties. At the local level of electoral politics, a developed party system has yet to emerge. Accordingly, our research focuses first on the contexts in which electoral cleavages develop and are maintained; e.g., what Gemeinde characteristics are associated with plurality and PR elections, local voter group entrenchment, and the entry of political parties? Once political parties have entered local elections, do they become entrenched or do they disappear? What is the sequence of timing?

A large body of comparative research suggests that partisan politics is the dependent variable. Parties may be viewed as the outgrowth of the processes of social and economic change. For the establishment of parties, fundamental conditions must first be met.¹ Our concern thus centers on what type of changes are most relevant to the local formation of political parties. An attempt to ascertain the ranges of conditions supportive of a local party system in Germany will, therefore, consider the political, socio-economic, and cultural structures of Gemeinden as possible independent variables.

The official election statistics discussed previously are based upon published totals of elections in all Gemeinden. Reliance on these totals for local electorates may produce the same fallacy of aggregation that prompted this research. Differences among Gemeinden are masked since all are included together. Furthermore, much vital information is excluded from the official totals. A community to community analysis through time is necessary to avoid the dilemmas of unjustified generalizations and to answer many unresolved questions about the nature of the local electorate.

A 20 percent systematic sample is the basis for the following examination of local electorates in varying socio-economic and political settings in Rhineland-Palatinate.² Information for each Gemeinde was gathered on the total electorate, voter turnout, individual party votes, and for local elections the number of council seats being contested, as well as numerous socio-economic indicators.

The collector of local electoral statistics encounters a number of difficulties in preparing the raw data for processing and analysis. Local statistics are not nationally centralized but published by the individual states. Comparison is hindered by the lack of uniformity in the reporting of these statistics. More important to the present study is that a single state may not report similar statistics through successive elections. In our data analysis, the first local elections of 1948 are excluded because communal electoral returns were officially published only for Gemeinden over 2,000 inhabitants--less than one-fifth of the total communes.

Boundary changes resulting from mergers or dissolution of Gemeinden further complicate time-series analysis. Through the local government reorganizational act of 1968, more than 300 communes were dissolved and merged into others. The magnitude of these boundary changes necessitated the exclusion of the 1969 elections. Our comparative community study of local electorates is possible then for four local elections and all state and national elections through 1967.

Levels of Politicization

To understand the dynamics of party development, information about communes at varying levels of electoral competition was gathered. One means of evaluating the spread of partisan politics in local communities is through examination of the number and character of electoral lists by Gemeinde. This reaching out of the party system into new territory characterizes the process of politicization: "the breakdown of the traditional system of local rule through the entry of nationally organized parties into municipal elections."³

The crucial first step is the transition from plurality to PR elections. Instead of unaffiliated candidates, competitive lists of groups organized for electoral struggle characterize the ballot. A PR electoral system with lists provides an entry for partisan politics into local government because local notables must now organize into groups in order to obtain political office. This first change by no means assures that electoral competitors are political parties: many contests remain exclusively in the domain of local voter groups. The initial thrust toward partisan politics occurs then when one

nationally organized political party enters local elections. The next step would be the introduction of additional party lists-- although local voter group lists still remain. Full politicization occurs only when all lists are of national political parties.

To distinguish among communes with different forms of electoral lists and competition, we categorized all local elections into one of five levels of politicization: 1) one or no list, plurality election, 2) two or more local voter group lists, 3) one party list, one or more local voter group lists, 4) two or more party lists, one or more local voter group lists, and 5) party lists only.⁴

The gradualness of this process is already apparent from our knowledge that a majority of Gemeinden maintain plurality elections and that local voter group lists predominate in PR elections. Table 15 demonstrates the actual progression of politicization in four local elections.

TABLE 15

THE PROCESS OF POLITICIZATION
IN LOCAL ELECTIONS, 1952-1964

| Electoral list alternatives | 1952 | 1956 | 1960 | 1964 |
|--|------|------|------|------|
| | % | % | % | % |
| Total # of <u>Gemeinden</u> =576 | | | | |
| 1 or no list, plurality election | 44.1 | 49.0 | 55.0 | 52.4 |
| 2 or more local voter group lists | 28.6 | 26.7 | 20.3 | 20.8 |
| 1 party list, 1 or more local voter group lists | 14.1 | 12.0 | 10.6 | 12.0 |
| 2 or more party lists, 1 or more local voter group lists | 10.8 | 10.4 | 10.8 | 11.5 |
| party lists only | 2.4 | 1.9 | 3.3 | 3.3 |

The process of politicization is neither a unilateral process nor a process which contains a momentum of its own. Although the number of Gemeinden reaching full politicization increased minutely, the number of Gemeinden reverting back to the prepoliticized stage increased the most dramatically. Local voter groups monopolize one-fifth of the elections. Communes at either a very low level or at an intermediate stage of politicized contests comprise another one-fourth. A mere 3 percent of the communes engage in purely partisan electoral politics.⁵

The slowness with which local political habits change and the ability of local voters to synthesize communal norms with modern structures delay the process of politicization. Exclusion of political parties from determining the composition of local government is the norm. Even after the entry of national party organizations into local settings, resistance to partisan politics continues unabatedly. Voter groups remain quite viable electoral competitors as indicated by the stability of the number of Gemeinden maintaining local voter groups in the presence of two or more political parties.

Fluctuations in Levels of Politicization

Movement toward partisan politics is not an automatic process: at the same time, changes in politicization do occur. By comparing electoral list alternatives in one election with the following election by Gemeinde, we may measure the nature of change. Of particular interest are questions concerning the magnitude and direction of change. What proportion of Gemeinden maintain their same level of politicization over time? What proportion manifest

changes? What levels of politicization are most susceptible to change?

In the 1956 election, 176 of the total 576 communes were at another level of politicization than in the 1952 election. Communes experiencing electoral list changes between the 1956 and 1960 elections and the 1960 and 1964 elections were 158 and 133, respectively. Although fewer communes deviated from their past pattern in each successive election, at least one-fifth of the communes fluctuated in their type of electoral competition. The nature of the changes in levels of politicization is portrayed in Table 16.

TABLE 16
CHANGES IN LEVEL OF POLITICIZATION
IN LOCAL ELECTIONS BY GEMEINDEN

| <u>Gemeinden</u> changing from: | 1952- 1956 | 1956- 1960 | 1960- 1964 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | % | % | % |
| 1 or no list, plurality election | 16.5 | 13.8 | 17.0 |
| 2 or more local voter group lists | 34.5 | 44.8 | 31.6 |
| 1 party list, 1 or more local voter group lists | 51.9 | 47.8 | 39.3 |
| 2 party lists, 1 or more local voter group lists | 33.9 | 23.3 | 17.7 |
| party lists only | 71.4 | 27.3 | 36.8 |

Plurality contests are the least susceptible to change. Less than one-fifth of the communes in the prepoliticized stage advanced to any form of competitive or partisan politics. Before the possibility of change to any degree is apparent, a Gemeinde must switch to a PR electoral system. In the PR elections, the most

volatile stage of politicization occurs when one party list is introduced along with local voter group lists. One-half to two-fifths of communes at this level did not remain there in successive elections. The greatest fluctuations in changes take place in the fully politicized contests. Almost three-fourths of the Gemeinden holding purely partisan elections in 1952 did not hold such elections in 1956. By 1964, however, approximately three-fifths of the Gemeinden at the level of complete politicization maintained that level.

A further examination of the communes with PR elections which changed in the character of their electoral lists suggests many hurdles remain to confront movement toward partisan politics. Of the one-third to two-fifths of the Gemeinden in each election that altered their previous positions of solely local voter group lists, more than 75 percent went back to noncompetitive plurality elections. The tendency to switch to a lower level of politicization characterizes the changes in the three categories of partisan elections as well. Thus in communes with one party list on the ballot which was altered in successive elections, the party lists disappeared in three-fourths of the communes. The drop-out rate of political parties is quite high at the low level of politicization. In Gemeinden experiencing change, the odds are 3:1 for the disappearance of the one party against the introduction of additional parties.

The intermediate level of politicization in which two or more political parties are present along with local voter groups is the most stable of partisan contests. Something of a standoff occurs

between voter groups and parties. Local voter groups remain in the path of partisan politics occasioned by the presence of at least two political parties. When change does occur, for the first time the direction is almost as apt to be toward partisan engagement as disengagement. Forty-six percent of the group of communes which changed in 1964 entered into purely partisan elections. Yet if we consider the number of changes in Gemeinden with only party list alternatives, the resilience of local voter groups is apparent. In 1964, local voter groups entered lists in 36.8 percent of the communes whose lists were monopolized by political parties in 1960. Exclusion of local groups from electoral competition does not prevent their penetration in a later election.

The fragility of partisan electoral list alternatives over time implies that certain structural conditions are a prerequisite to sustain partisan divisions. We wish, therefore, to examine the relationship between forms of electoral competition and other communal characteristics. The size of the Gemeinde is the first factor that we will evaluate. All Gemeinden were stratified into six categories of population. Concurrent data were available for each local election.

The Kendall rank-order correlation coefficients of politicization with Gemeinde size are .54 in the 1952, 1956, and 1960 elections and .57 in the 1964 election (significance level .001). This strong association between size of community and politicization is demonstrated in Table 17.

The tiny hamlets of less than 150 inhabitants are marked by the almost pure elimination of competition. Villages with populations to 500 overwhelmingly maintain nonpartisan politics, but the beginning

of fractionalization into groups of local citizens occurs. Noncompetitive elections fall under 50 percent for the first time in communes of 500 to 1,000 inhabitants, and one-fourth have some form of partisan elections, primarily of only one party lists. The most diverse group and the one where political parties make their first breakthrough is the Gemeinden of the size 1,000 to 3,000. In towns with 3,000 and more inhabitants, partisan politics are entrenched, albeit in a limited form since local voter groups compete against parties in most of these towns.

TABLE 17
LEVEL OF POLITICIZATION
BY SIZE OF GEMEINDE

| Electoral list alternatives | Number of inhabitants | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|---------|
| | to 150 | 150- 500 | 500- 1,000 | 1,000- 3,000 | 3,000- 10,000 | 10,000+ |
| <u>1952 election</u> | | | | | | |
| <u>Total Gemeinden=100%</u> | 66 % | 260 % | 141 % | 78 % | 27 % | 4 % |
| 1 or no list | 86.4 | 55.0 | 33.3 | 7.7 | 3.7 | .. |
| 2 or more local lists | 9.1 | 37.3 | 34.8 | 16.7 | .. | .. |
| 1 party + local lists | 4.5 | 6.5 | 27.0 | 29.5 | .. | .. |
| 2 party + local lists | .. | .4 | 3.5 | 39.7 | 81.5 | 75.0 |
| party lists only | .. | .8 | 1.4 | 6.4 | 14.8 | 25.0 |
| | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| <u>1964 election</u> | | | | | | |
| <u>Total Gemeinden=100%</u> | 67 % | 246 % | 146 % | 80 % | 30 % | 7 % |
| 1 or no list | 91.0 | 68.3 | 43.8 | 10.0 | 3.3 | .. |
| 2 or more local lists | 9.0 | 26.4 | 26.7 | 12.5 | .. | .. |
| 1 party + local lists | .. | 4.9 | 21.9 | 30.0 | 3.3 | .. |
| 2 party + local lists | .. | .4 | 5.5 | 43.8 | 56.7 | 71.4 |
| party lists only | .. | .. | 2.1 | 3.8 | 36.7 | 28.6 |
| | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Structural Conditions for Politicization: Cultural

The size of a Gemeinde reflects a cultural dimension which is quite important to understanding the slowness of the politicization process. The smaller the commune, the more important become face-to-face contacts and informal roles. Small communes may act as a "quasi-group" reference structure for the rural dweller much like his urban counterpart's occupational role.⁶ When personal relationships are the basis of communal life, political conflict is easily translated into personal strife. Communal harmony becomes a goal to be protected against outside divisive forces such as political parties.⁷ The act of voting formally sanctions the role of local notables--persons who have shown their leadership qualities through other areas of communal life. Political relations are one aspect of the more encompassing social relations of the village. Divisions that do occur are kept primarily local. Notables organize their own local groups to submit election lists, and the cleavages introduced by partisan politics are avoided.

Our inference that small Gemeinden function as a quasi-group in voting behavior cannot be directly validated by ecological data; however, survey data from other sources lend support to this belief. One German study concluded "in small communities (less than 1,000 inhabitants) participation in politics is not behavior functionally differentiated from other behavior."⁸ Switches in voting behavior occurred, regardless of change in demographic characteristics of these Gemeinden, only when local notables changed their commitment. In other words, political consensus remains in the midst of social

or class division in small communes as long as the traditional leaders incur the loyalty of local followers.⁹

Structural Conditions for Politicization: Socio-economic

As a Gemeinde becomes larger, the possibility of cleavages and issues for partisan division is enhanced. Its economy is more differentiated and its social groups less homogeneous. New functionally specific leadership groups compete with traditional ones occasioning a split in previously monolithic leadership groups or the alliance of local notables with outside groups. The effects of economic development upon partisan development are suggested in Table 18.

The Gemeinden with partisan elections possess more of the indicators of industrialization and urbanization than do the Gemeinden with nonpartisan elections. This evidence is in the mainstream of the information gathered on the effects of industrialization and urbanization on partisan politics in Norway and other countries. In Rokkan's words:

The lower the density, the smaller the communities, the less developed and differentiated the economy, the more personal and territorial the style of representation and the less developed the organizations for local electoral competition.¹⁰

Since local voter groups are present in the overwhelming majority of partisan elections, the data in Table 18 possibly indicate mere fractionalization of electorates. Political parties may not be the primary electoral organizations. An increase in the diversity and complexity of communal life may not necessarily ensure that socio-economic divisions are channeled through political parties.¹¹ To investigate the sociological bases that sustain party conflict, a

TABLE 18

ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF GEMEINDEN WITH
NONPARTISAN AND PARTISAN ELECTIONS IN 1964^a

| Characteristic | nonpartisan elections ^b | partisan elections ^c |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Population density (per square kilometer) | 86 | 241 |
| Employment structure | | |
| % white collar & civil servants | 7.9 | 16.7 |
| % manual workers | 32.9 | 42.2 |
| % self-employed | 22.0 | 17.4 |
| % female | 42.5 | 38.1 |
| % commuters (<u>Auspendler</u>) ^d | 34.8 | 42.4 |
| (<u>Einpendler</u>) ^e | 8.4 | 17.7 |
| Primary income sources of the population | | |
| % in agriculture ^f | 51.4 | 27.7 |
| % in production | 30.8 | 41.8 |
| % in trade | 8.2 | 14.3 |
| % in services | 9.6 | 16.1 |
| Local government viability | | |
| Community tax strength (DM per inhabitant) | 40.8 | 79.6 |
| Kilometers of municipal streets | 3.3 | 9.1 |
| | N=322 | N=154 |

^aCalculations of economic variables are based on 1961 census data.

^bIncludes plurality elections and FR elections with only local voter groups.

^cIncludes all FR elections with one party or more.

^dAuspendler: percent of community work force that commutes out of the community for work each day.

^eEinpendler: percent of community work force that commutes into the locality each day.

^fIncludes forestry and fishing.

more refined concept of partisan politics is needed than is knowledge of the incidence of party lists in local elections.

An index of partisan mobilization was created to measure the strength of political parties in local elections.¹² Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated for partisan mobilization with various socio-economic growth characteristics of the Gemeinden. The correlations are given in Table 19.

TABLE 19
CORRELATES OF PARTISAN MOBILIZATION
IN LOCAL ELECTIONS, 1956-1964^a

| Economic variable | 1964 | 1960 | 1956 |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|
| White collar & civil servants | .58 | .57 | .56 |
| Population density | .57 | .58 | .56 |
| Agriculture | -.52 | -.53 | -.50 |
| Trade | .48 | .48 | .47 |
| Population size | .45 | .44 | .45 |
| Municipal streets | .42 | .39 | .39 |
| Services | .38 | .36 | .30 |
| Community tax strength | .36 | .34 | .33 |
| Commuters (<u>Eipendler</u>) | .36 | .36 | .33 |
| Self-employed | -.36 | -.37 | -.34 |
| Population change ^b | .35 | .36 | .32 |
| Production | .33 | .36 | .36 |
| Manual workers | .31 | .32 | .31 |
| Female employees | -.31 | -.34 | -.31 |
| Commuters (<u>Auspendler</u>) | .18 | .21 | .19 |

^aDemographic variables are calculated from 1961 census data. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients are significant at the .001 level.

^bChange in size of population of Gemeinde between 1950 and 1961.

The main demographic correlates of partisan mobilization in local elections are white collar and civil servants, population density, and work force in agriculture. Gemeinden combine rural and urban

components in varying proportions, but the vast majority of Gemeinden are located at the rural end of the spectrum. The inhabiting influence of the Gemeinde on partisan mobilization stems from structural features which complement the cultural dimension discussed above. Change is occurring in the socio-economic sphere, but the nature of this change is what is crucial for partisan mobilization. Economic growth common in communes is the abandoning of agriculture for more profitable occupations. Increasingly the small town dwellers are becoming commuters (Auspendler) working in industrial enterprises. The communes then are becoming less isolated culturally and more differentiated economically and socially.

Yet demographic indicators of the type change actually occurring are more weakly associated with partisan mobilization (manual workers .31, Auspendler .18) than are the indicators of urbanization (white collar and civil servants .58, population density .57). The urban structural conditions most conducive to partisan mobilization are missing from most Gemeinden by the de facto nature of local governmental units.

In order to better understand the relationship of Gemeinde socio-economic characteristics to partisan mobilization, multiple stepwise regression analysis was utilized. The cumulative impact of the demographic variables is seen in Table 20.¹³

Combining the two indicators of urbanization, white collar and civil servants and population density account for approximately 40 percent of the variance. The proportion of the work force in white collar occupations remains the most important predictor of partisan mobilization.

TABLE 20

MULTIPLE STEPWISE REGRESSION OF PARTISAN
MOBILIZATION IN LOCAL ELECTIONS, 1964^a

| Independent variable | Multiple R | Variance accounted for |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------------------|
| White collar & civil servants | .579 | .336 |
| Population density | .630 | .396 |
| Catholics | .637 | .405 |
| Agriculture | .642 | .413 |

^aDemographic variables are calculated from 1961 census data. All correlations are significant beyond the .001 level.

Our investigation of the structural conditions for partisan mobilization suggests that the relationship of socio-economic development to party development is more complex than commonly thought. Although economic growth may encourage social and political fractionalization, a specific constellation of socio-economic components sustains partisan competition. To evaluate this hypothesis, factor analysis was employed to obtain summary measures of socio-economic development so that we could separate the key factors from one another. The rotated factors of the socio-economic variables reveal three distinct dimensions (Table 21).¹⁴

We identify the first factor as the industrial dimension of socio-economic development. It shows high loadings of indicators of industrial occupations and a corresponding decrease of the agriculture indicators. The second factor can be termed the tertiary dimension of socio-economic development since its high correlates reflect the presence of services, public administration, and trade and their expansion in the economy. The third factor is identified as the

size dimension. The reader will note from Table 20 that these three dimensions are represented in the first four variables in the multiple stepwise regression.

TABLE 21
ROTATED FACTORS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC VARIABLES

| | I | II | III |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Manual workers | .919 | .176 | .073 |
| Production | .893 | .145 | .159 |
| Commuters (<u>Auspendler</u>) | .861 | .106 | -.211 |
| Self-employed | -.751 | -.294 | -.129 |
| Agriculture | -.743 | -.630 | -.182 |
| Female employees | -.570 | -.357 | -.036 |
| White collar & civil servants | .238 | .859 | .276 |
| Services | .080 | .657 | .163 |
| Trade | .299 | .654 | .126 |
| Commuters (<u>Einpendler</u>) | .202 | .605 | .230 |
| Community tax strength | .058 | .520 | .307 |
| Population size | .060 | .252 | .937 |
| Municipal streets | .003 | .179 | .830 |
| Population density | .263 | .455 | .667 |
| % of explained variance | 66.5 | 24.3 | 9.2 |

To ascertain the relationship of partisan mobilization to each of the socio-economic dimensions, a separate factor analysis was performed. The loadings for partisan mobilization are .197 on the industrial factor, .469 on the tertiary factor, and .382 on the size factor.¹⁵ The nature of the loadings supports the hypothesis derived from the previous analysis. Partisan mobilization is linked to a tertiary economy and to larger political units--characteristics of urban society and a modern economy. The urbanization process can, therefore, be separated into a size component and two economic components.

When we distinguish levels of socio-economic growth, we may better account for the stability and endurance of local political habits in the midst of rapid environmental change. The industrial dimension, most typical of the change in communal structural development, is the least associated with partisan mobilization. The key to communal partisan mobilization resides more in the level of socio-economic development than in the process of general socio-economic development.

Our analysis of German local electorates suggests a corollary to the general conclusions of comparative research on party system development. The importance of the relationship of socio-economic development to partisan mobilization has previously been conceived mainly in terms of the process of socio-economic development.¹⁶ Since the crucial factor for partisan mobilization in other countries was the change from a primary economy, further investigation among levels of economic growth was superfluous. For example, by 1947 less than 10 percent of Norwegian rural communes held nonpartisan local elections.¹⁷ Full politicization of Swedish rural communes occurred even earlier; 80 percent had purely partisan elections in 1938.¹⁸ Yet in Germany where partisan mobilization has made small inroads into local electoral behavior the process of economic change stands in second place to the specific type of economic change.

Notes

¹LaPalombara and Weiner, eds., especially their introductory chapter.

²No periodic tendency was observed in the list from which the sample was selected. To further check for any systematic bias, sample characteristics were compared with universe characteristics.

³Rokkan, "Electoral Mobilization," p. 244.

⁴These five levels of politicization are used by Rokkan in his analyses of Norwegian local electorates. See *ibid.*, pp. 250-253, and Rokkan and Valen, "The Mobilization of the Periphery," pp. 191-199.

⁵Norwegian communal politics contrast sharply with the German in levels of politicization. In 1963, a mere 2.1 percent of Norwegian communes held plurality elections as compared to 55.7 percent with party lists only. Rokkan, "Electoral Mobilization," p. 251.

⁶Erwin K. Scheuch, "Social Context and Individual Behavior," in Dogan and Rokkan, eds., p. 150.

⁷For a discussion of how communal harmony is achieved in France, see Kesselman's study.

⁸Scheuch, p. 153. For France, see Tarrow, p. 356.

⁹This phenomenon of personalized relations has been defined as political clientelism. A number of country studies show that such a traditional system of personal relationships persists behind the facade of modern political institutions, e.g., voting. See Sidney Tarrow, Peasant Communism in Southern Italy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), and Rene Lemarchand and Keith Legg, "Political Clientelism and Development," Comparative Politics, IV, No. 4 (January, 1972), 149-178.

¹⁰Rokkan, "Methods and Models in the Comparative Study of Nation-Building," p. 89.

¹¹Regional analyses of Norwegian communes found that sharp differences in levels of politicization existed among communes with similar socio-economic characteristics. See Rokkan, "Electoral Mobilization," pp. 252-253.

¹²The index of partisan mobilization is calculated as:

$$\text{Index} = \frac{p_1 + p_2 + \dots + p_n}{\text{total vote}} \cdot 100$$

p=party; the value of the index ranges from 0 to 100. A value of 100 indicates full partisan mobilization; thus, as the percentage of votes cast for local voter groups declines, the value of the index increases.

¹³More variables than are given in the table were statistically significant, but they did not contribute any theoretical significance, and thus were omitted.

¹⁴The factor analyses in this research were calculated using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) principal factor solution with iteration and varimax orthogonal rotation. The inter-correlation matrix of the variables entered in the factor analysis is given in Appendix D.

¹⁵The factor analysis was recomputed in order to include political variables, but there was little change in the factors themselves. The same dimensions were clearly identifiable and even the loadings of the socio-economic variables showed almost undetectable changes.

¹⁶See Rokkan, "Electoral Mobilization."

¹⁷Ibid., p. 251.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 261.

CHAPTER V

ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

We noted earlier that involvement as measured by the act of voting is rather high in local elections. We now wish to pursue the relationship of voter participation to communal elections in more depth. Voting is important because it is the sole act of participation in politics for most citizens in most countries.

An investigation of voting turnout by levels of elections and by type of electoral contests may be particularly valuable in sorting out some of the many theories about electoral participation. Research in the United States and other countries has found that national elections attract the most attention, that partisans are more likely to vote than are nonpartisans, that competition stimulates turnout on election day, and that the motivation to vote is dependent upon perceived closeness of the electoral contest.¹ Yet, recent communal research in at least one European country calls into question most of the above inferences. French local electoral turnout is higher than national electoral turnout. This high interest in municipal elections is, at the same time, coupled with low competition for office and low partisan involvement.²

We cannot evaluate individual intentions and motivations through ecological data, but we can discuss electorates in terms of recurring patterns in voter turnout. Our sample data allow an analysis of electoral participation within the framework of varying political

settings. Gemeinden, as communities, are pervasive mediums within which individual behavior occurs. By learning how voters in each community vote as a body, we may generalize about the constellation of characteristics associated with certain types of voting.

The aggregate turnout data discussed in Chapter III portrayed general tendencies, but the characteristics of small Gemeinden, the overwhelming majority, were masked through the presence of a very few large cities. The trends discussed below reflect primarily the patterns of voting turnout in Gemeinden of 10,000 and less inhabitants. These small units accounted for 99 percent of the total Gemeinden and for 61 percent of the total population in 1969.

Using the sample data based on the Gemeinde as the data unit, we found that national and local turnout discrepancies are minimized. The specific breakdown of local, national, and state turnout rates is given in Table 22. In each election during the time period under observation, electoral participation increased in local elections. National turnout, however, remained stable at approximately 88 percent since the 1957 election. A plateau of participation has been reached in national elections which has not been reached in the local elections.³ Thus, in the most recent local and national elections, the difference in turnout was less than 2 percent. Involvement in local elections is not greatly distinguished from involvement in national elections. If the trends continue, we may expect local participation to closely parallel national.⁴ State elections, by contrast, mobilize significantly fewer voters than either local or national elections. Changes in state election turnout rates have clearly not occurred in proportion to the other changes; turnout stabilized at approximately 76 percent.

TABLE 22

TURNOUT DISCREPANCIES
IN NATIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL ELECTIONS^a

| Election years | | local turnout | % | | % | |
|----------------|-------|------------------|----------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| state | local | | national | national over local | state over local | national over local |
| 1951 | 1952 | 1953 | 81.9% | + 2.9 | - 9.9 | + 12.8 |
| 1955 | 1956 | 1957 | 82.5 | + 5.5 | - 7.9 | + 13.4 |
| 1959 | 1960 | 1961 | 83.7 | + 4.2 | - 6.6 | + 10.8 |
| 1963 | 1964 | 1965 | 85.5 | + 1.7 | -10.0 | + 11.7 |

^aDifference of means test significant at .001 level.

These findings merit attention and raise some troublesome questions as to the adequacy of previous insights into German electoral participation. The explanation that voting is merely a variety of social conformity expressing a moral obligation to the political system cannot sufficiently account for the discrepancies in turnout among local, state, and national elections.⁵ Why does the "moral obligation" slack off so much in state elections? Do voters "feel" less civic responsibility toward state government? Although the act of voting may represent only minimal involvement in the political process, this involvement clearly varies among levels of the political system.

Another common explanation concedes that participation is to some degree a function of interest aroused largely by political party appeals. Turnout in national elections is higher than in state elections because less committed partisans vote in national elections, whereas only "core" party supporters participate in state elections.⁶ This reasoning is deficient also. If partisan mobilization is the key to electoral activeness, local elections, which are overwhelmingly nonpartisan, should show the lowest turnout rates of all elections. Yet many more citizens exercise their vote privilege in local than in state elections. An attempt to answer the questions raised by the above findings is unfortunately outside the scope of this study. It is hoped, though, that scholars in the area of survey research will focus on some of these issues in the future.

The Function of Size

Gemeinden with 10,000 and less inhabitants manifest diverging turnout tendencies from the Gemeinden with 10,000 and more inhabitants. The relevance of size is demonstrated in Table 23 where Gemeinden are stratified into small and large units.⁷ Size of commune is inversely related to turnout rates in local elections. A great discrepancy is present in the local contests occasioned by a sharp drop of 8.5 percent in the large communes. The national-local differences in turnout rates are more marked in the large units than in small because of the small turnout at the local level. National turnout, in contrast, shows scarcely any differentiation according to the size of the Gemeinde.

TABLE 23
TURNOUT RATES BY SIZE OF GEMEINDE^a

| Election | <u>Gemeinden</u> with less than 10,000 inhabitants | <u>Gemeinden</u> with more than 10,000 inhabitants |
|---------------|--|--|
| 1960 local | 83.7% | 75.2% |
| 1961 national | 87.2% | 86.5% |

^aCalculations based upon the Gemeinde as the data unit. Total Gemeinden=2916.

The relation of town size to turnout varies crossnationally. Norwegian cities have higher local and national turnout rates than do rural communes, and the greatest local-national turnout discrepancies occur in the rural communes.⁸ Turnout patterns in French communes are opposite of the Norwegian patterns. Turnout varies directly with

communal size.⁹ German electoral participation is quite similar to the French trends in both its higher local turnout rates and the inverse relationship of size to local turnout. The structural characteristics of small units encourage more active participation in local elections. There exists a high proportion of local offices to local citizens, and the campaigns assume highly personalistic attributes. One votes for or against a person--most likely his neighbor or a relative--and not just a name on the ballot. The directness of local campaigning recedes as the unit becomes larger, and voter solicitation may become less intense.¹⁰

However, among Gemeinden of less than 10,000 inhabitants, the size factor loses its explanatory value. For instance, in 1964, communes of under 150 inhabitants showed the highest turnout rates of 88.5 percent; but beyond this size, no direct relationship was observed. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient of population size and voter turnout in the 1964 local election showed a statistically significant but very weak negative relationship (-.14). Thus, while size of a political unit may help to account for turnout variations between gross categories of Gemeinden, it does not influence electoral participation in a consistent linear fashion. To determine sources of variation in local turnout rates, we now turn to a consideration of communal political features.

The Electoral System

Mean turnout percentages were calculated for local elections between 1952 and 1964 according to the type of electoral contests. In agreement with Norwegian communal research, we found that communes

with noncompetitive, plurality elections had statistically significant lower electoral participation than did the communes holding competitive PR elections.¹¹ These differences, while statistically significant, must be greatly qualified for German electorates. They only apply only for the last three elections, and the magnitude of difference is quite small. In contrast to the German communes, Norwegian communes with PR elections mobilized from 13 percent to 20 percent more voters than did the communes with plurality elections in the 1945-1959 time period.¹² In the German local elections of 1952, plurality and PR elections reflected no significant differences in turnout rates. These small communes with plurality elections still show higher turnout rates in all local elections than their urban counterparts with PR competitive elections. The differences in voter participation for the sample Gemeinden by type of electoral system are given in Table 24.

TABLE 24
TURNOUT RATES IN PLURALITY AND PR
LOCAL ELECTIONS

| Year | Mean | Plurality standard deviation | Mean | PR standard deviation |
|------|--------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1952 | 81.9% ^a | 11.55 | 82.0% ^a | 9.93 |
| 1956 | 80.8 | 10.17 | 84.1 | 7.96 |
| 1960 | 82.7 | 10.75 | 94.7 | 7.64 |
| 1964 | 84.8 | 9.58 | 86.8 | 7.97 |

^aDifferences of mean test not significant for a one-tailed test; $z=.11$; all other differences are significant at the .05 level.

The lower mean turnout rates in plurality elections distort to an extent the the tremendously high interest that is present in many of these contests. In every election some of these communes had 100 percent

voter participation; this full mobilization was not obtained in the PR elections. On the other hand, other communes with plurality electoral systems attracted less than 50 percent participation. Communes with plurality elections thus show the greatest fluctuations in voter turnout. The standard deviation of turnout in plurality elections stood at a mean of 10.51 for the four election years compared with a mean of 8.38 for the PR elections.

Nonpartisan and Partisan Elections

So far we have compared turnout in the units at one extreme with the aggregated turnout for all other units. It is, therefore, of interest to analyze differences in turnout among the PR elections from one level of politicization to another. Of particular concern is the relevance of party incentives for voter mobilization.

We first analyzed the PR elections according to the presence or absence of political parties. Whereas nonpartisan PR elections (local voter groups only) showed statistically significant lower turnout rates from partisan PR elections (one or more political parties) in 1952, no significant differences were present between the elections in 1956. By 1960, however, communes with nonpartisan PR elections had a statistically significant higher turnout rate.

Interest in local elections may be becoming more closely associated with the viability of local voter groups. The communes where local voter groups either monopolized the ballot or were present along with only one political party had the highest electoral participation in all elections. A consideration of voting strength revealed that voter turnout was higher in the 1964 elections where local voter

groups obtained a majority of the vote against one and more political parties than vice versa.

To evaluate the relative relevance of local voter groups as opposed to political parties, we then excluded the intermediate levels of politicized contests. The communes with solely local voter group list alternatives were compared to the communes with solely party list alternatives. Table 25 portrays the nature of turnout differences in PR elections monopolized by local voter groups as contrasted to those monopolized by political parties.

TABLE 25
DIFFERENCE IN TURNOUT BY GEMEINDEN
WITH NONPARTISAN PR ELECTIONS
AND WITH SOLELY PARTISAN PR ELECTIONS

| Year | Nonpartisan elections | Solely partisan elections |
|------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| | % | % |
| 1952 | 80.8 | 80.3 |
| 1956 | 83.3 | 83.0 |
| 1960 | 85.9 | 85.5 |
| 1964 | 88.5 ^a | 85.6 ^a |

^aDifference of means test significant at the .05 level for a one-tailed test.

In the first three elections, less than 1 percent variation in turnout occurred between communes having nonpartisan and fully politicized contests; but by 1964, communes having only local voter groups had a statistically significant higher turnout than those communes having only parties. The attractive power of local voter groups is reflected in their average increase of 2.5 percent in each successive election. In 1964, these Gemeinde attained a local turnout of 88.5 percent of

the electorate. Gemeinden monopolized electorally by parties, in contrast, rose to a high of approximately 85 percent in 1960 and remained at that level in 1964. We might infer that the reservoir of voters for partisan factions is not as great as for local voter groups, since more of the electorate was consistently mobilized in each nonpartisan election.

From additional investigations, there is some basis for hypothesizing that purely partisan electoral politics actually retard local involvement. An analysis of changes in electoral list alternatives in successive elections with respect to the inclusion or exclusion of local voter groups was performed. Voter turnout declined in each pair of elections analyzed in the communes which switched from ballots characterized by local voter groups and political parties to only parties. On the other hand, turnout rates increased in the communes which "reverted" from purely partisan elections to allow the inclusion of local voter groups.¹³

The relationship of nonpartisan and partisan elections to high turnout may be evaluated from another perspective. Over one-third of the communes actually had greater turnout for the 1964 local elections than for the 1965 national elections. Their mean turnout in 1964 was a very high 83.8 percent. These large turnout rates showed an inverse relationship to the presence of political parties. The mean index of partisan mobilization of 6.6 demonstrates the extreme electoral weakness of political parties in communes with very high local participation.¹⁴ With each step toward full politicization, higher local turnout became the exception. Table 26

gives the percent of Gemeinden within each level of politicization that had greater participation in the local than in the national elections.

TABLE 26

GEMEINDEN WITH 1964 LOCAL TURNOUT GREATER
THAN 1965 NATIONAL TURNOUT BY LEVEL OF
POLITICIZATION

| | |
|---|-------|
| one or no list, plurality election | 40.7% |
| local voter group lists only | 46.7 |
| one party list, one or more local voter group lists | 39.1 |
| two or more party lists, one or more local voter group lists | 9.1 |
| party lists only | 5.3 |

More than two-fifths of all Gemeinden with nonpartisan local elections (plurality or PR with local voter groups only) had more participation on the local than national level, while a mere 5 percent of all Gemeinden with purely partisan elections did so. Nonpartisan elections definitely do not lead to voter apathy, nor do partisan cleavages activate greater interest in local electorates. The reverse is, contrarily, suggested through a consideration of both the electoral strength and presence of local voter groups and political parties. The tendency of local voter groups to enhance local participation as opposed to the suppressing effects of partisan groups was observed.

On the other hand, the importance of the politicization of local electorates to electoral participation derives from its relationship to national turnout rates. As the level of politicization

in local election increased, so did turnout in national elections. Communes with fully politicized local contests mobilized an average of 4.5 percent more voters in national elections than did communes with nonpartisan local elections between 1952 and 1964. When we evaluated national turnout according to the local electoral strength of political parties, however, we found a statistically significant but theoretically insignificant relationship: Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient of the 1964 partisan mobilization index and the 1965 turnout percentage was .18.¹⁵

Our data analysis questions the view that political parties are the primary agents of integration and mobilization at the local level. Local notables and local voter groups equal and often surpass the parties as such agents. Communal factors that encourage high electoral involvement may, in fact, retard partisan involvement. For example, when parties are viewed as precursors of open political conflict and personal strife, the penetration of the party system into new territory is resisted. Small town dwellers synthesize high citizen interest with predominantly noncompetitive or nonpartisan elections suggesting that voting is a culturally accepted community norm whereas local party organizations are not. Electorates do not necessarily mobilize in a partisan direction.

If mobilization toward participation in the electoral process and partisan mobilization are quite distinct phenomena, the possibility of change in the character of local elections depends upon the direction of change in voters' preceptions rather than the extent of change in their participation. No new influx of voters exists for

activation by the parties since so many already participate. High voter interest occurs independently of partisan mobilization. The reaching out of the party system to encompass local electorates is, therefore, impossible through change occasioned by increased participation.

Our research suggests a corollary to the generalizations about the linkage of party system development and electoral participation. Most of the western mass parties emerged with the extension of suffrage to new groups of citizens. The origins of political parties have thus been largely defined in terms of the emergence of the idea that political power must include participation by the mass public.¹⁶ Yet the local weakness of German and French parties exists where universal suffrage has long been present and high participation achieved. The expansion of mass participation on the local level is not necessarily accompanied by a corresponding spread of the party system.

Notes

¹ See Campbell et al., pp. 49-66, 145-146; Lester Milbrath, Political Participation (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1965), pp. 90-109; V. O. Key, Jr., Southern Politics (New York: Vintage Books, 1949), pp. 510-523; Key, Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups, p. 594; Rokkan and Valen, "The Mobilization of the Periphery," pp. 183-195; and Rokkan, "Electoral Mobilization," p. 261.

² Kesselman, pp. 17-30; Tarrow, "The Urban-Rural Cleavage," pp. 343-346.

³ This "leveling off" of turnout rates in national elections is characteristic of the Federal Republic as a whole. The turnout percentages for each national election are:

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1949 | 78.5% | 1961 | 87.7% |
| 1953 | 85.8% | 1965 | 86.8% |
| 1957 | 87.8% | 1969 | 86.7% |

⁴ Of comparative interest are findings in other European countries. Analyses of local-national turnout discrepancies in Norwegian communes reveal that turnout is consistently lower in local elections than in national elections. Rokkan and Valen, "The Mobilization of the Periphery," pp. 184-185. An average of 3 percent more Frenchmen vote in local elections than in national elections. Kesselman, p. 23.

⁵ See Verba, pp. 146-154.

⁶ See Heidenheimer, The Governments of Germany, p. 202.

⁷ The number of large cities in our sample was inadequate for comparative purposes. The statistical analyses reported in official election publications were used for these calculations. The selection of the years analyzed was dictated by the availability of information on turnout by the size of the Gemeinde. Likewise, the size stratification of Gemeinden into those of less than and more than 10,000 inhabitants was necessitated by a lack of other comparative stratification schemes used in national and local election reports.

⁸ Rokkan and Valen, "The Mobilization of the Periphery," pp. 184-185.

⁹ Kesselman, p. 25.

¹⁰ For a discussion of how the political ecology of small communes encourages high participation, see Tarrow, "The Urban-Rural Cleavage," p. 356. Cf. Rokkan, "Citizen Participation in Political Life," p. 376 and Key, Southern Politics, pp. 510-513.

¹¹Cf. Rokkan and Valen, "The Mobilization of the Periphery," p. 193-194.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Turnout differences for Gemeinden exhibiting electoral list changes were computed relative to those turnout differences for Gemeinden not exhibiting electoral list changes.

¹⁴The method of calculation for the index of partisan mobilization is given in Chapter IV, note 12.

¹⁵Cf. the Norwegian findings reported in Rokkan and Valen, "The Mobilization of the Periphery," p. 195.

¹⁶Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, "The Origin and Development of Political Parties," in LaPalombara and Weiner, eds., pp. 3-42. Cf. Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems and Voter Alignments: An Introduction," in Lipset and Rokkan, eds., pp. 3-42.

CHAPTER VI

NATIONAL PARTIES AND THEIR LOCAL ELECTORATES

The party system exists largely on top of communal politics. The process of politicization is still in the elementary stages. Party conflict has spread to encompass a mere one-fourth of the local electorates, and local voter groups exist alongside political parties in most of these cases.

How the vote is structured in this minority of Gemeinden into which national party organizations have penetrated is the focus of this chapter. We wish to examine the nature of changes in the structure and character of the local party system. How well do parties fare against each other and against local voter groups? What sources of strength exist for the various electoral competitors? What direction does change in voting patterns assume? How are parties and local voter groups tied in with the communal socio-economic structure?

The Pattern of Party Development

The battle for partisan mobilization is fought among three partisan contestants, the CDU, SPD, and FDP, against numerous local voter groups. Of interest is the pattern of development of the national parties in establishing local organizations. Does a particular party initially mobilize local electorates and other parties enter later after the barriers to partisan mobilization have been lowered, or do several parties simultaneously penetrate new

territory? To determine which parties first enter local elections, we considered the Gemeinden which had only one political party in opposition to one or more local voter groups. Table 27 portrays the character of the party lists in these communes.

TABLE 27
FIRST PARTY TO ENTER LOCAL ELECTIONS^a

| Party | 1952 | | 1956 | | 1960 | | 1964 | |
|--------|----------|------------|----------|------------|----------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| CDU | 42 | 51.9 | 39 | 56.5 | 35 | 57.4 | 37 | 53.6 |
| SPD | 37 | 45.7 | 30 | 43.5 | 25 | 41.0 | 31 | 44.9 |
| FDP | 1 | 1.2 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 1.6 | 1 | 1.4 |
| Other | <u>1</u> | <u>1.2</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0.0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0.0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0.0</u> |
| Totals | 81 | 100.0 | 69 | 100.0 | 61 | 100.0 | 69 | 99.9 ^b |

^aGemeinden with one party list and one or more local voter group lists.

^bRounding error.

When only one party competes in local elections, the CDU is most apt to be that organization; yet SPD local organizations are far from negligible since they are present in two-fifths of these Gemeinden. The FDP, by contrast, does not enter actively into communal politics as the sole partisan agent.

The efforts of the CDU to initially mobilize supporters in local elections may be linked to the nature of the communes at this stage of politicization. Partisan politics first makes its entry in small towns of 500-3,000 inhabitants.¹ The strength of the CDU in the rural and small towns of the Federal Republic has long been affirmed in national findings.² That the CDU is a significant force of

partisan penetration may be related, then, to the availability of local supporters in these communes. The SPD, as a largely urban party, would seemingly have less incentive to compete in the very small towns.

However, in each successive election, the SPD has scored greater relative gains over the CDU in its ability to penetrate new territory. We analyzed those communes which changed from plurality or PR elections with only local voter groups to include one political party. Of the fifteen Gemeinden which so changed in 1956 from 1952, the SPD was the political party in only three cases. By 1964, the SPD was the sole party in twelve cases and the CDU in fifteen cases where no party had been present in the 1960 election. The commanding lead held by the CDU in first mobilizing local partisans is diminishing. The CDU maintains its superior position, however, since very few communes change to partisan elections.

In the total number of partisan elections contested, the CDU continues to hold a slight advantage over the SPD.³ Table 28 shows the relative frequencies of the parties and local voter groups in all partisan elections. The most active partisan competitor, the CDU, has made the most dramatic increases in entering local contests so that in the 1960's, it presented candidates in 80 per cent of the partisan elections. The SPD has local units organized in three-fourths of the partisan communes, while the FDP is a minor local contestant entering less than one-fifth of these elections.

TABLE 28

PROPORTION OF PARTISAN LOCAL ELECTIONS
CONTESTED BY PARTIES AND LOCAL VOTER GROUPS

| Contestant | 1952 (N=157) | | 1956 (N=140) | | 1960 (N=142) | | 1964 (N=154) | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| CDU | 112 | 71.3 | 108 | 77.1 | 114 | 80.3 | 122 | 79.2 |
| SPD | 110 | 70.1 | 100 | 71.4 | 106 | 74.6 | 115 | 74.7 |
| FDP | 16 | 10.2 | 15 | 10.7 | 23 | 16.2 | 27 | 17.3 |
| Local voter groups | 143 | 91.1 | 129 | 92.1 | 123 | 86.6 | 135 | 87.7 |

Local voter groups appear on the ballot in most all communes. The success of Gemeinden with partisan elections in excluding local groups is a rarity, but partisan elections do show slight tendencies of becoming more politicized. The entrenchment of local partisan agents is suggested through a consideration of changes in the number of party lists presented in an election. A sole party contender was characteristic of 52 percent of all partisan elections in 1952. This type of election dropped to 45 percent in 1964 due to increases in the number of partisan elections with two or more party lists (from 40 percent to 43 percent in 1952 and 1964, respectively) and to increases in purely partisan list alternatives (from 9 percent to 12 percent in 1952 and 1964, respectively).

The Electoral Strength of Parties

To further evaluate how well parties and local voter groups fare in local elections, we must consider their voting strength. Table 29 gives the percentages of the total partisan votes obtained by each competitor.

TABLE 29

PROPORTION OF VOTE OBTAINED BY POLITICAL PARTIES
AND LOCAL VOTER GROUPS IN LOCAL PARTISAN ELECTIONS

| Contestant | 1952 | 1956 | 1960 | 1964 |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | % | % | % | % |
| CDU | 29.8 | 29.8 | 32.2 | 31.4 |
| SPD | 25.0 | 26.3 | 26.4 | 27.7 |
| FDP | 2.0 | 1.7 | 2.4 | 2.8 |
| Other parties | 1.6 | .3 | .1 | 0.0 |
| Local voter groups | <u>41.5</u> | <u>40.1</u> | <u>38.8</u> | <u>38.2</u> |
| | 99.9 ^a | 98.2 ^b | 99.9 ^a | 100.1 ^a |

^aRounding error.

^bError in statistical information or in data preparation for computer processing.

Local voter groups, the most active contestants, also reaped the plurality of votes. Although they showed a slight decline in their voting strength over the four elections, they held the lead steadfastly over the individual partisan opponents. The CDU and SPD each received approximately three-tenths of the vote in 1964, and the SPD has more consistently bettered its position than has the CDU.⁴ The FDP remained an insignificant contestant in terms of voting strength as well as presence.

Sharp differences in the voting strength of parties are apparent, though, among the three types of partisan elections according to electoral list alternatives. For instance, the CDU makes a better electoral showing against local voter groups than does the SPD. Controlling for which party was the sole partisan opponent against local voter groups, the difference between CDU and local voter groups votes was a mean 5.6 percent for 1952-1964. The CDU received a

majority of the vote in the first two elections, and the local voter groups received a majority of the vote in the later two elections. The mean difference in vote, 1952-1964, for SPD and local voter groups was 20.5 percent. Local voter groups were the benefactors of the majority vote in each election. Since Rhineland-Palatinate is a "CDU state," we cannot assume de facto that the CDU is a stronger competitor against local voter groups than is the SPD. Comparative research in predominantly "SPD states" would indicate the extent to which a linkage between state and local strength is present.

Table 30 presents the dispersion of party and local voter group votes by the character of the electoral list alternatives. Local voter groups steadily obtained a majority of the votes against one party contenders in the 1952-1964 elections. The decrease in their percentage of total votes (see Table 29) derived from their changes in strength against two or more political parties. In the 1960's, the local voter groups were surpassed by political parties and lost the plurality of votes they held in the 1950's.

The CDU's lead over the SPD in total partisan votes cast stems from its proportion of votes obtained in contests where it is the lone partisan contestant in opposition to local voter groups. In elections with two or more parties, the CDU fares less well than does the SPD. The CDU in purely partisan elections originally obtained a majority of the votes, but gradually declined at the same time the SPD was leaping forward. The SPD gains enabled it to surpass the CDU in the 1964 elections. The SPD, in terms of voting strength, is a weak competitor primarily against local voter groups. Against other

TABLE 30

DIFFERENCES IN PARTISAN VOTING STRENGTH BETWEEN
"LESS POLITICIZED" AND "MORE POLITICIZED" COMMUNES

| Contestant | 1952 | 1956 | 1960 | 1964 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| One party list, one or more local voter group lists: | | | | |
| CDU | 26.9% | 28.5% | 26.2% | 25.6% |
| SPD | 19.6% ^a | 17.2% | 16.7% | 15.9% |
| FDP | .6% | 0.0% | .1% | 1.7% |
| Local voter groups | 52.0% | 51.2% | 56.9% | 56.9% |
| | 100.0% | 96.9% ^b | 99.9% ^c | 100.0% ^c |
| | N=81 | N=69 | N=61 | N=69 |
| Two or more party lists, one or more local voter group lists: | | | | |
| CDU | 28.5% | 27.8% | 33.7% | 33.6% |
| SPD | 29.8% | 34.0% | 30.1% | 34.3% |
| FDP | 2.4% | 2.3% | 3.1% | 2.5% |
| Other parties | 3.1% | .6% | .3% | 0.0% |
| Local voter groups | 36.1% | 34.6% | 32.8% | 29.6% |
| | 99.9% ^c | 99.3% ^b | 100.0% | 100.1% ^c |
| | N=62 | N=60 | N=62 | N=66 |
| Party lists only: | | | | |
| CDU | 52.3% | 49.4% | 46.8% | 45.1% |
| SPD | 34.8% | 41.9% | 45.4% | 47.3% |
| FDP | 10.5% | 8.6% | 7.8% | 7.6% |
| Other parties | 2.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| | 99.9% ^c | 99.9% ^c | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| | N=14 | N=11 | N=19 | N=19 |

^aIncludes a small proportion of "other party" votes.

^bError in statistical information or in data preparation for computer processing.

^cRounding error.

parties, the SPD has shown the largest increases. The FDP is very weak against both partisan and nonpartisan opponents alike.

The CDU, SPD, and local voter groups each have sources of strength in a core of communes. While the CDU and SPD have achieved close parity with one another, neither can equal the over-all attractive power of local voter groups. In 1964, the CDU received a plurality or majority of the votes in 31.8 percent of the 154 sample Gemeinden holding some form of partisan elections. The SPD was close behind the CDU in dominating 30.5 percent of the elections, while the local voter groups monopolized 37.7 percent of these elections. The mean winning vote of local voter groups, a high 65 percent, points up once again the endurance and strength of nonpartisan competitors in electoral struggles against agents of partisan mobilization.⁵

Controlling for which party received a plurality or majority of the votes, the communes were then analyzed as to their socio-economic structure. The sources of strength of the CDU, SPD, and local voter groups in partisan elections are quite different (Table 31).

Local voter groups are strongest in small and sparsely inhabited communes which possess less of the indicators of urbanization and industrialization than do the other communes. The partisan communes dominated by local voter groups are more advanced economically than the communes with no partisan competition but generally below the means for partisan contests.⁶ The CDU communes resemble the local voter group communes in many economic characteristics, but diverge sharply on the religious dimension. Catholicism prevails overwhelmingly in the CDU strongholds. A SPD winning vote is, in contrast, quite

negatively associated with the percent of Catholics in a Gemeinde. SPD communes, in addition, are the most economically developed. To ascertain the strength of the relationships between a certain type of vote and certain communal structural characteristics, a series of bi- and multivariate statistical techniques were utilized.

TABLE 31

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF COMMUNES
BY "WINNER" OF 1964 LOCAL ELECTIONS^a

| Structure | CDU communes | SPD communes | Local voter group communes |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Population size | 2040 | 5637 | 1112 |
| Population density | 212 | 378 | 154 |
| % self-employed | 17.8 | 15.6 | 18.5 |
| % white collar & civil servants | 17.0 | 19.8 | 13.8 |
| % manual workers | 40.6 | 45.2 | 41.2 |
| % female employees | 39.3 | 35.8 | 38.8 |
| % commuters (<u>Auspendler</u>) | 39.7 | 43.4 | 44.0 |
| % . (<u>Eiuspendler</u>) | 17.8 | 22.9 | 13.5 |
| % in agriculture | 27.9 | 19.9 | 34.0 |
| % in production | 39.8 | 48.0 | 38.6 |
| % in trade | 14.3 | 16.2 | 12.8 |
| % in services | 18.0 | 16.0 | 14.7 |
| % Catholics | 88.6 | 34.4 | 58.3 |
| % refugees | 8.8 | 12.0 | 8.6 |
| Community tax strength (DM per inhabitant) | 83.6 | 92.4 | 65.8 |

^aSocio-economic variables are calculated from the 1961 census data; these variables represent means.

Local Voter Groups

The electoral strength of local voter groups, as was expected, was inversely related to the main socio-economic correlates of the index of partisan mobilization.⁷ The simple correlation coefficient of 1964 local voter group vote with percent of white collar and civil

servant workers in a commune was -.50 and with population density, -.47. Weaker negative correlations existed with the other indicators of socio-economic development as well.⁸

Not surprisingly, the importance of the ruralism dimension for support of local voter groups emerges quite clearly when we note the simple correlation coefficients of three of its indicators: .46 with percent population in agriculture, .31 with percent of self-employed workers, and .27 with percent of female workers.

To evaluate the cumulative impact of the demographic variables upon local voter group strength, we next employed multiple stepwise regression analysis. The findings are reported in Table 32.⁹

TABLE 32
MULTIPLE STEPWISE REGRESSION
OF LOCAL VOTER GROUP VOTE
IN 1964 LOCAL ELECTIONS^a

| Independent variable | Multiple R | Variance accounted for |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------------------|
| White collar and civil servants | .498 | .248 |
| Population density | .532 | .283 |
| Catholics | .542 | .294 |
| Production | .556 | .310 |
| Municipal streets | .564 | .321 |

^aThe independent variables are calculated from 1961 census data. The correlations are reported only for those variables whose individual contribution to R^2 was greater than 1 percent. All correlations are significant at the .01 level.

The total contribution of five demographic variables accounts for one-third of the variance in the votes of local voter groups. Of interest is that the simple r 's for all variables are negative.

The proportion of the work force in white collar and civil servant occupations and population density, measures of a tertiary economy and urbanization, have the most explanatory value. The presence of the Catholic variable supports the implications suggested in Table 31. A commune with a predominance of Catholics, regardless of economic development, was less inclined to vote for nonpartisan groups when the CDU was present.

An additional insight into the relative impact of the demographic variables upon the local voter group vote is provided in a consideration of the changes that took place in the composition of the multiple R between the 1960 and 1964 elections. In 1960, the first step in the multiple stepwise regression analysis was percent in agriculture with a multiple R of .526, the second step yielded a multiple R of .582 for population density, and the third step showed a multiple R of .590 for percent in white collar and civil servants. These three variables "explained" 35 percent of the variance of local voter group vote in 1960. Other variables, while statistically significant, possessed negligible explanatory value.

The 1964 increase in the contributory power of the white collar variable is quite notable. In its explanatory power, the density variable, by contrast, declined although it remained as the second most important component of local groups' vote. The main predictor of the local voter group electoral showing in 1960 (percent in agriculture) did not enter into the later stepwise regression analysis so that all the independent variables were negatively associated with the dependent variable in 1964.

The movement toward economic modernity and urban life cuts deeply into the ability of local voter groups to compete effectively in local elections. Yet as is the case with partisan mobilization, the type of socio-economic growth common to communal change is more weakly associated with the electoral position of local voter groups. The contribution to R^2 of the variable measuring the percent of work force in production was only 1.6 percent in 1964. Increasing communal social and economic diversity does not necessarily forecast the disappearance of local voter groups. In fact, if judged by their over-all presence and strength in local elections, local voter groups have more successfully adapted to changing socio-economic conditions than have the political parties.

A comprehensive examination of the relationship of the demographic variables to voter support for the individual political parties may better illuminate their plight on the local level. A knowledge of the national supporters of the CDU and SPD is inadequate to explain local party support. In national and state elections, the CDU has been predominant in rural Catholic constituencies. This linkage of party strength to religious and social bases cannot be as directly applied to communal politics.

The first difficulty arises from the classification schemes applied in national research. The criterion of population density is commonly used for determining urban or rural. For example, a constituency is classified as rural if the number of inhabitants per square kilometer is under 400 or, alternatively, if 12 percent or

more of the population is engaged in agricultural production.¹⁰ The religious composition of a constituency is determined by whether simply the number of Catholics is greater than the number of Protestants or vice versa and, in stricter terms, by whether one religion characterizes 60 percent of the population. By these criteria, our sample Gemeinden would be considered rural Catholic constituencies. For the partisan communes, mean density equals 241 inhabitants per square kilometer with a standard deviation of 226; the mean percentage in agriculture equals 28, standard deviation, 18; and the mean population is 61 percent Catholic with a standard deviation of 35. A classification scheme in which such an overwhelming proportion of cases fall into one category is useless.¹¹

The second difficulty arises from the nature of the conclusions drawn from the association of demographic variables to CDU and SPD strength. From the information derived from national research, we would predict that the CDU would be quite strong in local elections, and that the SPD would, correspondingly, be very weak. Yet our research found that the CDU and SPD were closely equal in terms of both electoral presence and voting strength in local elections. Most importantly, the CDU has been unable to mobilize its reservoir of traditional supporters. Local CDU electoral forces existed in only 662 of the 2918 Gemeinden and obtained 26 percent of the total votes cast in 1964.

In the following discussions, the reader should remember the differences inherent in using a Gemeinde as the data unit instead of

a federal voting district. There are 23,629 Gemeinden in the Federal Republic but only 248 federal voting districts. A description in terms of the composition of the voting district severely masks the variations among individual communes.¹² Urbanism or ruralism and Catholicism or Protestantism are not dichotomous attributes of voting constituencies, but rather they represent segments on a scale. The way these features are combined varies in proportion to the size of the unit of analysis. When we use the terms urban or Catholic, for instance, to describe communal structural features, we mean those Gemeinden possess more of the indicators of these concepts relative to other Gemeinden.

The Christian Democrats

Our 1961 census data allowed an analysis of the inter-relationships of social structure and voting behavior for the 1956-1964 elections. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients for the independent variables with CDU vote are given in Table 33.¹³ The CDU vote has steadily remained most closely linked to the Catholic variable, and its ability to explain the variance in CDU vote has increased in each election from 29 percent in 1956 to 42 percent in 1964. The second variable which best accounts for the Christian Democrat variance is the proportion of refugees in a Gemeinde.¹⁴ The other correlations in Table 33 are most notable for their lack of explanatory power; all economic variables are weakly associated with the CDU poll.

The importance of these independent variables lies in the nature of their association with the Christian Democratic poll. All indicators of economic and social growth are negatively related. Forebodingly,

the magnitude of this negativism has generally increased over the three elections. Each of the positively related economic correlations to CDU vote reflects agrarianism: proportions in agriculture, of small farms, and of female employees. CDU strength is clearly confined to the stagnant sectors of the economy.

TABLE 33

MAIN DEMOGRAPHIC CORRELATES OF
LOCAL CDU VOTE BY GEMEINDE, 1956-1964^a

| Socio-structural variables | CDU vote | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|-------|------|
| | 1956 | 1960 | 1964 |
| Population size | -.20 | -.16 | -.15 |
| Population density | -.21 | -.15* | -.17 |
| Change in population, 1950-1961 | -.06* | -.06* | -.21 |
| Catholics | .54 | .58 | .65 |
| Refugees | -.22 | -.28 | -.29 |
| Agriculture | .21 | .14* | .20 |
| Small farms ^b | .23 | .19 | .19 |
| Production | -.06* | -.11* | -.17 |
| Trade | -.27 | -.13* | -.21 |
| Female employees | .14* | .11* | .26 |
| White collar & civil servants | -.24 | -.08 | -.21 |
| Manual workers | -.03* | -.14* | -.15 |

^aThe demographic variables are calculated from 1961 census data. The data units are the Gemeinden where a CDU list appeared on the ballot in PR elections: 1956 N=108, 1960 N=114, and 1964 N=122. All of the simple correlation coefficients are significant at least at the .05 level except those marked with an *.

^bPercentage of farms under 7.5 hectares.

In this respect, it should be noted that agriculture was a stronger source of support for local voter groups ($r=.46$) than for the CDU ($r=.20$) in 1964. That agriculture is not a strong point in the favor of the CDU locally is obvious from analyses of the party's change indexes for 1956-1960 and 1960-1964.¹⁵ The change indexes indicated that the CDU in the second election of each pair lost votes in relation

to its previous poll. The correlations of percentage agriculture were $-.30$ with the 1956-1960 change index and $-.24$ with the 1960-1964 change index: the agricultural variable increased the losses of the CDU.¹⁶ In contrast, the percentage in agriculture correlations with the change indexes of local voter groups indicated that agriculture inhibited local voter group losses in 1956-1960 and 1960-1964. The Christian Democrats, on the local level of the electoral system, have no significant bases of support with the exception of Catholicism.

Our multivariate analysis tends to confirm this observation. Table 34 gives the results of a multiple stepwise regression of the demographic variables upon the CDU vote in 1964. Signifying the inability of other economic and social factors to come anywhere close to the import of Catholicism, the cumulative contribution of six additional demographic variables yielded an increase in R^2 of only 11.6 percent.

The Pearson product-moment correlations and the multiple stepwise regression analysis indicate that there is no clear-cut economic explanation of the CDU local vote, but the nature of the relationship suggests an intriguing phenomenon. Economic correlates of the CDU vote, albeit weak, are opposite to the correlates of political fractionalization partisan mobilization. A certain level of economic development exemplified by an increase in the industrial sector and a corresponding decrease in the agricultural sector comes close to being a prerequisite of political fractionalization. At the same time, partisan mobilization succeeds to the greatest extent in those Gemeinden

exhibiting growth toward a tertiary economy and larger political units. Indicators of both these changes are unfavorable to Christian Democratic electoral strength. Structural conditions which encourage partisan mobilization are simultaneously in conflict with CDU entrenchment. CDU strength rests largely in the least modern sectors of the economy.

TABLE 34
MULTIPLE STEPWISE REGRESSION
OF LOCAL CDU VOTE IN 1964^a

| Independent variable | Multiple R | Variance accounted for |
|---------------------------------|------------|------------------------|
| Catholics | .648 | .420 |
| Female employees | .659 | .434 |
| Self-employed | .678 | .460 |
| Change in population, 1950-1961 | .689 | .475 |
| Refugees | .716 | .512 |
| Trade | .725 | .525 |
| Manual workers | .732 | .536 |

^aThe correlates are reported only for those variables whose individual contribution to R^2 was greater than 1 percent. All correlations are significant at .001 level. The independent variables are calculated from 1961 census data.

The Social Democrats

In our correlational analysis of the other major local party contestant, the SPD, the religious dimension assumed greater relevance over time so that it was the most important structural variable determining party vote in 1964. Table 35 presents the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients of the demographic variables with SPD vote from 1956 to 1964.¹⁷

In Catholic areas, the SPD is definitely the loser. Ability to surmount this religious barrier is indicated, however, by a consideration

of other communal structural features. The correlates of an industrial economy--proportion of workers in production and in manual occupation--are moderately related to support for the Social Democrats. This positive linkage of the SPD to communal economic conditions is relatively higher than those economic conditions associated with the CDU vote. Although the import of these variables upon the SPD poll has declined over the three elections, this change is mitigated by other factors. The "unattractiveness" of the SPD to a different sector of the economy has lessened as well. Measures of a rural work force--percentage of female employees and self-employed--were not as negatively associated with the SPD vote in 1964 as in 1956.

TABLE 35

MAIN DEMOGRAPHIC CORRELATES OF
LOCAL SPD VOTE BY GEMEINDE, 1956-1964^a

| Socio-structural variables | 1956 | SPD vote 1960 | 1964 |
|---------------------------------|------|------------------|-------|
| Population density | .17 | .15* | .23 |
| Catholics | -.38 | -.48 | -.40 |
| Population over 65 years of age | -.22 | -.16 | -.13* |
| Refugees | .24 | .17 | .14* |
| Small farms ^b | -.31 | -.27 | -.30 |
| Production | .42 | .41 | .30 |
| Services | -.21 | -.18 | -.15* |
| Commuters (<u>Auspendler</u>) | .27 | .31 | .12* |
| Female employees | -.32 | -.33 | -.28 |
| Self-employed | -.36 | -.34 | -.28 |
| Manual workers | .42 | .36 | .23 |

^aThe demographic variables are calculated from 1961 census data. The data units are the Gemeinden where a SPD list appeared on the ballot in PR elections: 1956 N=100, 1960 N=106, and 1964 N=115. All of the simple correlation coefficients are significant at least the .05 level except those marked with an *.

^bPercentage of farms under 7.5 hectares.

The success of the Social Democrats in broadening their local appeal shows up dramatically in an examination of the demographic correlates of their change indexes. The SPD improved its electoral position in the 1964 elections in those Gemeinden where it competed in 1960. These increases were positively related to percentage of females ($r=.32$), Catholics ($r=.26$), services ($r=.22$), trade ($r=.22$), and white collar and civil servants ($r=.22$).¹⁸ The local SPD made a dent into the CDU strongholds of Catholics at the same time as it capitalized on modern economic settings.

The effects of Socialist gains among Catholics, while very limited, are discernible in the 1960 and 1964 multiple stepwise regression analyses presented in Table 36.

TABLE 36
MULTIPLE STEPWISE REGRESSION OF
LOCAL SPD VOTE IN 1960 AND 1964^a

| Year | Independent variable | Multiple R | Variance accounted for |
|------|---------------------------------|------------|------------------------|
| 1960 | Catholics | .484 | .235 |
| | Production | .604 | .365 |
| | Female employees | .629 | .396 |
| | Population over 65 years | .649 | .421 |
| | Trade | .656 | .431 |
| | Commuters (<u>Einpendler</u>) | .673 | .453 |
| 1964 | Catholics | .402 | .162 |
| | Production | .479 | .229 |
| | Trade | .516 | .267 |
| | Small farms ^b | .533 | .284 |
| | Commuters (<u>Einpendler</u>) | .548 | .301 |
| | Population density | .566 | .320 |
| | Population over 65 years | .575... | .330 |

^aThe correlates are reported only for those variables whose individual contribution to R^2 was greater than 1 percent. All correlations are significant at the .01 level. The independent variables are calculated from 1961 census data.

^bPercentage of farms under 7.5 hectares.

Although Catholicism was the most important single factor accounting for the Social Democrats' poll, its significance declined considerable between 1960 and 1964. At the same time, the economic conditions assumed more relevance. The production variable doubled its contribution to R^2 in the two elections, and the trade variable tripled its contribution.

The electoral position of the SPD, unlike that of the CDU, should benefit from any movement toward political fractionalization and partisan mobilization. In addition, the SPD seems capable of adapting its strategies to conform to the present structural realities of communal politics--noted by the weakening of negative associations of Catholicism and the agrarian indicators of self-employed and female employees. Although the CDU has been greatly favored by communal socio-economic features, it is most notable for its inability to capitalize on these structural conditions. CDU failures, in this respect, derive from the successes of its primary opponent, local voter groups.

Notes

- ¹Cf. Table 17.
- ²See the studies cited in Chapter I, note 21.
- ³The aggregate statistics indicate that in 1969 the SPD entered more local elections than did the CDU.
- ⁴The aggregate statistics show that the SPD has received more votes than the CDU from 1956 onward . This divergence from our sample data stems from the high percentage of votes received by the SPD in large cities. In 1964, the SPD obtained an absolute majority of the vote in seven of the twelve kreisfrei cities of Rhineland-Palatinate.
- ⁵The CDU obtained an absolute majority of the vote in 69.4 percent of the elections where it surpassed the other opponents. The respective figures for the SPD and local voter groups are 59.6 percent and 93.1 percent, respectively.
- ⁶Cf. Table 18.
- ⁷Cf. Table 19.
- ⁸Correlation coefficients were calculated only for those PR elections in which local voter groups were on the ballot. These correlations are significant at the .001 level.
- ⁹The FDP is such a minor contestant that it is not considered in the following analyses. It competed in a mere 2.7 percent of our 576 sample Gemeinden in 1964 and received a mean 1.2 percent of the votes in PR elections.
- ¹⁰Klingemann and Pappi utilize the density criterion, while Kaase applies the agricultural criterion.
- ¹¹These respective classifications are used by Klingemann and Pappi and by Conradt.
- ¹²The minimizing of extreme variation through data aggregation for large areas falsely inflates the results of most statistics. For a discussion of the impact that the unit of aggregation has upon the reliability of statistical tests, see Erwin K. Scheuch, "Cross-National Comparisons Using Aggregate Data: Some Substantive and Methodological Problems," in Merritt and Rokkan, eds., pp. 131-167.

¹³Cf. the demographic correlates of CDU vote in the 1965 national and 1963 state elections, Appendix E. These correlations are also based upon the Gemeinde as the data unit.

¹⁴The intercorrelation matrix of the demographic variables reveals that the refugee variable is more closely related to the Catholic variable than any other; however, the strength of the relationship is weak: $r=.24$.

¹⁵The formula for calculating the 1960-1964 CDU change index was:

$$I = \frac{\text{Percentage of CDU vote, 1964}}{\text{Percentage of CDU vote, 1960}} \cdot 100$$
 where CDU vote in 1960 was greater

than zero. Index values less than 100 indicate party losses; values greater than 100 indicate party gains. Cf. the similar change indexes employed by Hirsch-Weber and Schuetz, pp. 434-441.

¹⁶These simple correlation coefficients are significant at the .001 level and .01 level, respectively.

¹⁷Cf. the demographic correlates of SPD vote in the 1965 national and 1963 state elections, Appendix F. These correlations are also based upon the Gemeinde as the data unit.

¹⁸All correlations are significant at the .01 level. In the 1965 national election, SPD increases were also positively associated with Catholicism, $r=.27$.

CHAPTER VII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARTY SYSTEMS

Electoral politics at the local level shares few similarities with electoral politics at the national level. The primary differences relate to the question: "What entities, as the result of their activities, or even of their mere existence, have the effect of structuring the vote?"¹

The researcher who studies vote-structuring at the national level inevitably studies political parties. The question then turns to how many parties participate and how the vote is divided among them. Answers to these questions indicate what has been called the transformation of the German party system--a change from a multiparty system to a dominant two party system and a change from the predominance of the CDU to the increasing equality of the SPD with the CDU where there is alternation in power.

On the local level, however, vote-structuring to a very large degree takes place without any parties at all. The vote is structured by personalities as in plurality elections or by groups of local citizens with no partisan affiliation. Even within the minority of communes where parties have some role in structuring the vote, marked discrepancies exist between local and national electorates. Competition for voter support is not so much among parties as between parties and local voter groups. In a mere 3 percent of our sample Gemeinden do parties solely structure the vote.

What accounts for the preeminence of parties on the national level and their weakness on the local level? One explanation sees the party system as the outgrowth of basic socio-economic change in which political parties are dependent variables.² In this respect, it is helpful to conceptualize on a plateau of socio-economic development which is conducive to partisan mobilization, as we did in Chapter IV. While lower levels of socio-economic development may hinder partisan mobilization on the local level, they may not preclude it. We now wish to consider an alternative proposition: political variables are the primary factors in the development of a party system.

We will examine this proposition through a consideration of the aims of the national party, the electoral behavior of the Gemeinde members, the cleavage structure of local politics, and the attitudes of local party office holders. Partisan penetration and strength may be incongruent with a political culture which is strongly reinforced by the activity of local notables. However, in order to draw conclusions based upon the nature of our research, we must break the ubiquitous political culture concept into the aforementioned four elements.

The Local Party-Vote Relationship

With regard to the aims of the national party, a logical deduction for the politicization of local electorates is that a party desirous of gaining votes on the national level may see local level efforts as helpful. By establishing local organizations geared for electoral struggle, the party maintains continuity and stability of followers

between national elections. Yet our data analysis indicates that the Gemeinde is not the most advantageous level on which to expend party efforts. Whereas the state elections percentages of a specific party vote showed almost perfect linear relationships with the following national elections, the local elections percentages of party vote showed an average correlation of .6. Table 37 reports the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients for each pair of state-national elections and local-national elections by party.

TABLE 37

THE CORRELATES OF STATE AND LOCAL PARTY VOTE
PERCENTAGES WITH NATIONAL PARTY VOTE PERCENTAGES,
1951-1965^a

| Year | | Party | | Year | | Party | |
|-------|----------|-------|-----|-------|----------|-------|-----|
| State | National | CDU | SPD | Local | National | CDU | SPD |
| 1951 | 1953 | .98 | .95 | 1952 | 1953 | .69 | .71 |
| 1955 | 1957 | .97 | .93 | 1956 | 1957 | .66 | .70 |
| 1959 | 1961 | .98 | .88 | 1960 | 1961 | .63 | .69 |
| 1963 | 1965 | .98 | .90 | 1964 | 1965 | .68 | .61 |

^aLocal-national party correlations were calculated only for those Gemeinden in which the party participated in local elections. National party percentages of the vote are those of the second ballot.

State voting patterns account for at least 84 percent of the variance in the following national vote. Local voting patterns account for more than 50 percent of the variance in the following national vote. In that parties realize efforts spent in increasing national electoral vote could better be spent elsewhere, we can assume that political parties themselves to some degree determine the slow pace of local partisan mobilization. From the perspective of national office,

parties have few incentives to penetrate into the local level of the political system. In fact, with respect to the impact on national vote, a party's presence in local elections may be detrimental. Table 38 shows the share of total national electoral votes received by parties of varying local vote classifications.

TABLE 38
MEAN PARTY VOTE IN NATIONAL ELECTIONS
BY LOCAL ELECTORAL STRENGTH,
1953-1965^a

| Years | %CDU Vote | | %SPD Vote | |
|------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| | Local | National | Local | National |
| 1952-1953 ^b | 0 | 57.2 | 0 | 16.9 |
| | >0 < 50 | 55.9 | >0 < 50 | 30.9 |
| | ≥ 50 | 78.4 | ≥ 50 | 51.5 |
| 1956-1957 | 0 | 58.0 | 0 | 20.3 |
| | >0 < 50 | 56.6 | >0 < 50 | 33.5 |
| | ≥ 50 | 77.5 | ≥ 50 | 50.8 |
| 1960-1961 | 0 | 54.8 | 0 | 23.7 |
| | >0 < 50 | 48.6 | >0 < 50 | 36.9 |
| | ≥ 50 | 69.9 | ≥ 50 | 55.1 |
| 1964-1965 | 0 | 55.3 | 0 | 26.7 |
| | >0 < 50 | 50.5 | >0 < 50 | 38.8 |
| | ≥ 50 | 71.0 | ≥ 50 | 52.4 |

^aNational party vote percentages represent the second ballot returns.

^bThe first election in each pair is the local election.

Not surprisingly, the parties do best nationally in the Gemeinden in which they receive a majority of the local vote. But what is of most interest is their patterns in other communes. Where the CDU participates locally but receives less than 50 percent of the vote,

it actually does worse in terms of national vote than in the communes where it does not participate in local politics at all. The SPD, on the other hand, does show average national increases in accordance to its participation in local elections. However, over time the greatest national gains relatively for the SPD have still come from those Gemeinden where it does not enter into local politics. This information supports the proposition that political parties are themselves factors in determining partisan penetration--through their recognition of the small returns in terms of national vote.

We again find weak incentives for partisan competition when we confine our attention to the local elections. The entry of political parties into local units has not been accompanied by increasing partisan electoral strength. A review of the nature of CDU and SPD changes over time portrays the extent of continuing local resistance to partisan conflict somewhat dramatically. We compared changes in electoral strength of the parties in successive elections by the Gemeinden where they were previously in foregoing elections. Table 39 presents the CDU and SPD change indexes for the three pairs of local elections.³

TABLE 39
LOCAL CDU AND SPD CHANGE INDEXES

| Party | 1952-1956 | 1956-1960 | 1960-1964 |
|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| CDU | 79.5 | 91.7 | 88.1 |
| SPD | 91.3 | 84.7 | 105.1 |

In only one election did a party, the SPD in 1964, gain in electoral strength over its previous poll. In general, the SPD shows more staying power than the CDU: mean change indexes, 1956-1964, are 93.7 and 86.4, respectively. The CDU never increased its mean position in any of the pairs of elections but rather suffered losses. The politicization of local electorates does not lead to gains in party strength. While systems of local rule may be challenged by party entry, they by no means fade away. The mean change index for local voter groups for the 1956-1964 elections was 99. Local voter groups thus exhibit more staying power in partisan elections than do the political parties. The nature of the resistance to the presence of political parties will be discussed below.

Political Cleavage and Voter Alignment

Although socio-structural factors point to differing probabilities for the electoral position of partisan contestants, they, too, are less than satisfactory in describing electoral change on the local level. The variance unaccounted for by demographic variables in CDU and SPD votes is large: 46 percent and 67 percent, respectively.⁴ In contrast, the structure of party votes on the national level is quite closely linked to communal socio-structural characteristics. Three demographic variables "explain" 86 percent of the variance in the 1965 CDU vote, and four demographic variables account for 73 percent of the variance in the 1965 SPD vote.⁵

A further comparison of the simple correlates of party vote at the various electoral levels reveals two important points.⁶ 1) The

association of religious and class cleavages to party vote is very similar at all levels. A cluster of attributes may be associated with the propensity to vote CDU or SPD. 2) The relevance of these societal divisions to party vote is greater in the national and state elections than in local elections. Whereas state and national correlates of party vote are practically synonymous in strength, these same correlates are generally much weaker indicators of local party vote.⁷

For example, the strongest indicator of party vote is Catholicism. This variable accounts for 70 percent of the variance in CDU national vote but for only 42 percent of the variance in CDU local vote. The respective percentages for variance in SPD national and local votes are 52 percent and 16 percent, respectively. Likewise, although indicators of class are less associated with party votes in our sample, the same national-local discrepancies hold. The agricultural variable is twice as important in determining national CDU vote than it is in local CDU vote. The production variable is one and one-half times stronger in influencing national SPD vote than local SPD vote. The objective conditions are the same since the data unit of analysis is identical, but social divisions are not translated into partisan conflict with the same intensity in national and local party systems. National and state electorates are thus more polarized than are local electorates.

The crucial problem suggested by the lack of explanatory power at the Gemeinde level compared to the national level concerns how societal cleavages become translated into political cleavages. In Sartori's words:

As long as we take for granted that cleavages are reflected in, not produced by, the political system itself, we necessarily neglect to ask to what extent conflicts and cleavages may either be channeled, deflected, and repressed or, vice versa, activated and reinforced, precisely by the operations and operators of the political system.

While parties do not determine the number of Catholics, farmers, or manual workers within a Gemeinde, the presence of parties at the local level may determine whether or not Catholicism or class divisions become political issues. A Gemeinde has the same divisions of socio-economic groups in all levels of elections. In state and national elections, the nature of these divisions may be crucial; in local elections, they may have very little predictive value. The only Gemeinde difference between levels of elections is the complete partisan mobilization at the national and state levels and the relative lack of partisan mobilization at the local level.

To understand these discrepancies, it is helpful to distinguish between voter alignment along two cleavage dimensions--the functional form and the territorial form.⁹ Alignment along a functional axis is based upon commitment to a social group cross-locally. One votes with other group members whatever their localities, even if he comes into conflict with others in his specific communal environment. The territorial form of alignment is based upon commitment to one's locality and its corresponding norms. Internal socio-economic cleavages are diffused or suppressed in the interest of a local consensus. The differences in the local and national party structure relate to the relative weight of these two cleavages.

The national party system exemplifies the functional form of political representation. German cleavage lines run along religious and class lines which cross-cut each other.¹⁰ The territorial form of cleavage alignment, though not unimportant, is of minor relevance in comparison.¹¹

On the local level of the political system, however, the salience of functional cleavages is reduced. We suspect the reduction of socio-structural explanations in accounting for local party votes derives from the political importance of the Gemeinde as a social group which is not measurable through ecological data. The Gemeinde's strong influence on its members mitigates the influence of traditional social groupings upon the structure of the vote. In other words, voter alignment is influenced by territorial as well as functional cleavages.

The referent structure influencing voter behavior may be any of several social groups; e.g., the community, class or religion. One example from a recent survey study of "deviant" community voting behavior in national elections may clarify this idea.¹² In some cases commuters, especially skilled workers, voted as did their counterparts in metropolitan areas. In other cases, however, commuters voted in the same way as the prevailing pattern of their "bedroom" community. That belonging to a community may become such an important group reference point in national voting behavior signifies that it is probably more significant in local voting behavior.

The nature of the local political game reduces ties to social groups as political cleavages in favor of a "we," the local community

against "they," outside divisive forces, syndrome. The preeminence of territorial cleavages are clearly indicated in the majority of Gemeinden which hold no form of partisan elections. In the minority of Gemeinden into which national parties have penetrated, the saliency of territorial cleavages remains through the political perpetuators of local voter groups. Thus, party candidates for local office, irrespective of partisan affiliation, attempt to assure voters that they are community men arising above narrow party interests reflecting functional cleavages.

Attitudes of Local Partisan Councilors

The extent to which local party councilors adopt the role of political representation of community interests versus that of party interests is exemplified in a recent study.¹³ Local office holders were interviewed as to which foci of political representation they adhered. An absolute majority of the interviewees agreed with the statement: "A councilman should represent neither his district and his voters, nor his party, nor particular interests, but only the community or county as a whole."¹⁴ The recognition that the Gemeinde may be especially qualified for this form of representation is illustrated in the reply of a CDU respondent.

That may be different at higher levels of government.
Here your own views are usually in harmony with the
general interest, as in the case of new schools.
Most questions we deal with are from the beginning
directed toward the common goal.

The inappropriateness of party politics to communal politics was particularly underlined. A majority of partisan councilors did not fully support the proposition: "A councilman should in the first place

represent the interest of his party and work closely with the majority of his party." The views of these local office holders suggest the need to go into some depth about the nature of their replies.

Those who disagreed completely with the role of a party man were most vehement in distinguishing the local level as distinct from other levels. One respondent said: "No, because party tactical considerations are inappropriate here. They are by nature foreign to our situation. Party politics have no place here." Another respondent replied: "At the local level we deal mostly with technical questions that have nothing to do with party politics." A third answered: "No, I'm of the opinion that one must be free and not act according to party guidelines. Especially not here in the village. That doesn't fit here." These respective answers came from SPD, CDU, and FDP councilors.

Those councilors who expressed conditional approval of the party man role again evidenced the same feelings. A CDU council member said: "Not necessarily. Party politics aren't always appropriate here at the local level." An FDP officeholder replied: "He must see whether or not the party line is advantageous for his level, however. With this limitation, yes." Another FDP member said: "Not as the main goal. Party views must be coordinated with voter interests. Many voted for me as a personality" A CDU councilor answered:

No, he must represent the interest of the community not those of his party. But there may be some expectations--in cultural affairs. In the retention of religious instruction in the schools."

The message is clear--partisan struggles should not disrupt communal harmony. Although no data are available, we might safely infer that local voter group councilors would be stronger than these

partisan councilors in the rejection of political divisions structuring the vote.

The tie-in with the national party system, however weak, is a handicap in the entrenchment of local parties. Although a local partisan candidate or councilor may not appeal to local voters on a strictly partisan platform, he has still adopted a party label. And parties are widely identified as representing groups intruding upon the common good of the community. On the other hand, local voter group representatives by definition indicate that their main orientation is directed toward communal concerns. Parties are suspect of being translators of functional cleavages into political issues where territorial cleavages are equally important. Local parties are deprived of their functional social bases of support and usurped by local voter groups in territorial support bases.

A multitude of factors thus converge to keep political parties out of local elections entirely or to ensure their electoral weakness. Many communes lack the social bases supportive of partisan conflict. The parties themselves may not push local expansion--either because of the marginal national vote utility or because of their lack of staying power in the local elections which they have penetrated. This lack of local entrenchment may in turn be related to party inability to translate political cleavages into political resources.

Notes

¹Anthony King, "Political Parties: Some Sceptical Reflections," in Comparative Politics, ed. by Roy C. Macridis and Bernard E. Brown (4th ed.: Homewood: The Dorsey Press, 1972), p. 236.

²See LaPalombara and Weiner, "The Origin and Development of Political Parties," pp. 19-21.

³For the calculation and interpretation of the party change indexes, see Chapter VI, note 15.

⁴See Tables 34 and 36.

⁵See Appendices E and F.

⁶See Appendices E and F and Tables 33 and 35.

⁷The figures used in these comparisons were all aggregated at the Gemeinde level; the resulting correlation coefficients are, thus, of the same reliability. See Scheuch, "Cross-National Comparisons," pp. 148-153.

⁸Sartori, p. 89.

⁹See Lipset and Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures," pp. 9-26, for the formulation of these two cleavage dimensions.

¹⁰See Juan Linz, "Cleavage and Consensus in West German Politics: The Early Fifties," in Lipset and Rokkan, eds., pp. 283-321.

¹¹The Christian Social Union, the Bavarian based counterpart of the CDU, exemplifies the remnants of historically strong regionalism.

¹²Scheuch, "Social Context and Individual Behavior," p. 153. "Deviant" refers to the voting patterns of cities which could not be explained through ecological data.

¹³Arthur B. Gunlicks, "Representative Role Perceptions Among Local Councilors in Western Germany," The Journal of Politics, XXXI, No. 2 (May, 1969), 443-464.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 449. All the quotations cited below are from pp. 449-452.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study attempts to fill a void in information about the development of party systems with special reference to Germany. Previous German research, as with much other comparative research, has been confined to the national aggregation of electoral data. Yet as a number of recent studies of local politics have shown, voter alignment varies tremendously within nations. The structured contexts of electoral behavior exert a tremendous impact on the patterns of that behavior. We thus investigated the development of the party system at the grass-roots' level of German government to discern relationships between local and national partisan growth.

Since the statistical data upon which our research is based stem from one state, we are cognizant of the tentative nature of our conclusions. To check the validity of our generalizations, we are gathering similar statistics for all the German states. The brief overview of local elections in other states which is possible at this stage of our data collection confirms our major finding: the nonpartisan character of local elections reflected through the entrenchment and strength of local voter groups and through plurality elections.¹

Bavarian local voter groups in 1960 achieved one-half of the local vote. (Comparative 1960 percentages in Rhineland-Palatinate: 25.9 percent.) The CSU received a mere 15.5 percent of the vote and the SPD, 13.7 percent.² Plurality elections were held in 57.1 percent

of these Bavarian Gemeinden, while PR elections were held in only 42.9 percent. Bavarian political parties, like those in Rhineland-Palatinate, actually received a larger share of the vote in the 1948 local elections. The local vote in 1948 was divided as follows: CSU, 19.1 percent; SPD, 15.9 percent; and local voter groups, 38.3 percent.

In the 1964 Hessian local elections, local voter groups achieved 25.5 percent of the total vote.³ (Comparative 1964 percentage in Rhineland-Palatinate: 25.8 percent.) In local elections in Lower Saxony as well, local voter groups are an important factor. They obtained 24.4 percent of the 1968 local electoral vote.⁴ (Comparative 1969 percentage in Rhineland-Palatinate: 25.9 percent.) Only one electoral list was presented in 46.0 percent of the communes in Lower Saxony.

Bavaria, Hesse, Lower Saxony, and Rhineland-Palatinate are, thus quite similar in local electoral tendencies, although quite different in demographic compositions and political histories. Hesse is one of the most densely settled and urban states. Its population density was 225 inhabitants per kilometer in 1969, and five cities over 100,000 in population contained 26 percent of its inhabitants.⁵ Excluding the city-states, Hesse is the wealthiest German state in terms of GNP.

Bavaria is the largest state in area and the second largest in population. In these respects, Lower Saxony stands next to Bavaria in rank. Both are less densely populated than is Rhineland-Palatinate. Population density in Bavaria and Lower Saxony was 149 inhabitants per kilometer in 1969.⁶ With eastern boundaries, these two states have a large proportion of the refugee population. Bavaria is overwhelmingly

Catholic, while Lower Saxony, like Hesse, has a predominantly Protestant population.

The Bavarian sister party of the CDU, the Christian Social Union, is the major political party in Bavarian government. Hesse is a SPD stronghold, while Lower Saxony represents a third political pattern. The SPD and CDU are both strong in this state. The Minister-Presidency was held by the SPD in 1967, but the cabinet included CDU members as well. Based upon the similarity of the local political process in four states with widely varying political histories and demographic characteristics, we feel that our in-depth community to community analysis of Rhineland-Palatinate has general applicability.

Our examination, like Kesselman's French study, indicates two electoral games are played--national and local. Voting behavior in a community in national elections is largely unrelated to voting behavior in that same community in local elections.⁷ The major difference derives from local strong resistance to partisan politics. Local electorates over a twenty-year-period have consistently prevented the penetration of a party system into communal life.

A tradition of personalized relationships between local notables and their clients ensures that a formal political process (voting) merely reinforces informal positions. Approximately 50 percent of the Gemeinden avoid any form of electoral competition through plurality elections. Almost two-fifths of municipal office-holders thus achieve power uncontested.

Elements of a traditional relationship between leaders and followers persist even in communes with competitive list elections. Groups organized around local notables may compete quite actively among

themselves, but partisan alignment is not a political resource in these local games. The electoral superiority of local voter groups has not been successfully challenged by local branches of national parties: three-fourths of local elections occur without the presence of partisan lists.

The breakdown of systems of local rule is an infinitely slow process. Political parties contested more local elections in 1948 than in 1969. The politicization of local electorates is, thus, by no means a process with a momentum of its own. Indeed, the tendency to switch to lower levels of politicization in successive elections is more characteristic of most Gemeinden than is movement toward more politicized contests.

The inability of a party system to develop at the local level may be related to socio-economic, cultural, and political factors. Many Gemeinden lack the economic diversity which sustains partisan competition. Economic growth of itself is not a sufficient condition for partisan mobilization; rather, specific constellations of socio-economic development are required. Urbanization with its two components of growth toward units of a larger size and an economy of a tertiary character is most supportive of local partisan mobilization. By their de facto nature, most Gemeinden do not possess such characteristics.

In a comparative perspective, the economic factor alone, however, cannot adequately explain variations in the politicization of local elections. Norwegian communes at roughly the same stage of economic development are politicized to a greater degree than are the German communes. The German culture is a decisive factor. The penchant for avoiding conflict and the distrust of political parties are widespread

throughout German society. To be "above parties" and partisan conflict becomes more desirable at the local level because of the more general aspects of a communal culture.

German Gemeinden, like Swiss communes, have a long history of independence to which their members adhere. Opposition to political parties is one method of maintaining communal autonomy and resisting the encroachment of national governmental power. The pervasion of this tactic is evident in its broad utilization by French local communes in opposing government centralization.⁸

In this "climate of opinion," successive candidates for local office must vow their independence and desire to work for an unpartisan community good. The social bases of German politics are, thus, overridden by communal interests. Voter alignment is determined more on the basis of local cleavages than cross-local cleavages. That national and state electoral loyalties do not descend to the local level with much intensity is revealed by a consideration of determinants of CDU and SPD vote at the various electoral levels. Religion and social class account for far more of national and state party-vote relationships than local party-vote relationships. The extent of this remarkable divorce is clearly apparent in the CDU local electoral position. Although supported by a CDU state government, and favorable demographic population characteristics, it achieves a mere one-fourth of the vote in local elections in Rhineland-Palatinate.

In fact, the national party system is a third contributor to the infrequency of local political parties. The dispersion of state and national party votes shows little relation to local electoral efforts. The CDU has done better in national elections in the communes where it

did not compete locally than in the communes where it received less than half of the local vote. Likewise, the greater relative gains in national elections for the SPD have come from the Gemeinden in which it is not on the local election ballot. From a perspective of state and national power, local entry offers few incentives.

Local voters, largely without the stimulus of political parties, go to the poll in very high numbers. Interest in local elections equals interest in national elections and far surpasses interest in state elections. Indeed, partisan competition shows some signs of depressing turnout in local contests. The same attributes of Gemeinde life, such as smallness of territory and prevalence of face-to-face contacts, which hinder partisan mobilization, encourage high participation. Party growth is, thus, impossible through increased voter turnout. For change to occur, the perceptions and actions of the voters must first become reoriented.

The presence of local citizens who are highly mobilized but not in a partisan way raises doubts as to the extent that Gemeinden politics may be considered residual appendages of an evolving party system. Where such widespread indifference or resistance to parties exists, parties do not fulfill positive integrative functions.⁹ The great social, economic, and political change that has occurred in post-war Germany has not been matched by corresponding politicization of local units. A local party system has been neither a necessary nor efficient linkage between citizens and their government.

This lack of grass-roots change may be indicative of a more general lack of commitment to the principles of a competitive party system. For institutionalization of a party system, support must go

beyond electoral support; yet, this minimum requirement of support has not been met locally. The transformation of the national party system has occurred without it having strong roots at the local level. Our study of local electoral behavior raises simultaneous doubts as to the depth of change in the German party system and of the possibility of the penetration of a party system onto the grass-roots level of government.

Notes

¹ Limitations on the data collection restrict the following examples in terms of year and the selection of states.

² The Bavarian statistics reported here and below stem from, Bavaria, Beiträge zur Statistik Bayerns, Heft 220, Kommunalwahlen in Bayern am 27. März 1960 (Munich: Statistisches Landesamt, 1961), pp. 51-53. These statistics are aggregated on the basis of the 7,068 kreisangehörigen Gemeinden.

³ Hesse, Beiträge zur Statistik Hessens, Nr. 10, Die Kommunalwahlen am 25. Oktober 1964 (Wiesbaden: Statistisches Landesamt), p. 25.

⁴ The Lower Saxony statistics reported here and below stem from Lower Saxony, Statistik von Niedersachsen, Band 118, Die Kommunalwahlen in Niedersachsen am 20. September 1968, Part 1 (Hannover: Landesverwaltungsamt, 1969), p. 15. These statistics are calculated on the basis of the kreisangehörigen Gemeinden.

⁵ Handbook of Statistics, p. 16, and Statistisches Jahrbuch, 1970, p. 34.

⁶ Handbook of Statistics, p. 16.

⁷ Mark Kesselman, "Overinstitutionalization and Political Constraint," Comparative Politics, III, No. 1 (October, 1970), p. 37.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 21-44.

⁹ See Edinger, Politics in Germany, pp. 276-285, for a discussion of the integrative functions of the German party system.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE CONSTITUTION OF RHINELAND-PALATINATE

Article 49

"The Gemeinden are exclusively responsible for all local administration within their area. They may assume any public function, insofar as such function is not exclusively assigned by explicit legal provision to other agencies in the vital interests of the public.

"Gemeindeverbaende have the same position within the limitations of their legal jurisdiction.

"The right of self-government is guaranteed to the Gemeinden and Gemeindeverbaende. State supervision is limited to making certain that their administration is exercised in accordance with the laws.

"By law or ordinance state functions may be delegated to Gemeinden and Gemeindeverbaende, or to their chief officials, for execution, according to instructions.

"Through an equitable distribution of tax revenue, the state must insure to Gemeinden, and Gemeindeverbaende the funds required to exercise their own functions and those delegated to them. For their voluntary public activities the state places sources of income at their disposal which shall be administered on their own responsibility.

"Conflicts involving legal relations between Gemeinden and their citizens will be settled by the administrative courts."

Article 50

"In all Gemeinden and Gemeindeverbaende representative bodies are to be elected by the citizens on the basis of the principles of Article 76. These representative bodies are entitled to elect the principal officials."

Article 76

"All popular votes (elections, initiatives and referenda) on the basis of this Constitution are general, equal, direct, secret and free.

"All citizens are qualified voters who are 21 years old and have resided in the Land for half a year unless they have been deprived of their civil legal status or their civic rights."

Source: Harold O. Lewis, New Constitutions in Occupied Germany (Washington, D.C.: Foundation for Foreign Affairs, 1948), pp. 117-118, 98.

APPENDIX B

SYNOPSIS OF LOCAL ELECTIONS LAWS^a

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| State | Electoral System | Petition Requirements ^b | Restrictive Clause ^c |
|------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Hesse | PR | 10 for parties, twice the number of elected councilors for local voter groups | 5% |
| Rhineland-Palatinate | PR; if 1 or no lists filed, plurality election. | 5 for parties represented in preceding council; otherwise, 2% of eligible voters within the boundaries of 10-200 signatures | 5% |
| Bavaria | Modified PR; if 1 or no lists filed, plurality election. Direct election of mayor. | 10 for parties and local voter groups represented in preceding council; otherwise, 4 times the number of elected councilors. | none |
| North Rhine-Westphalia | Plurality and PR; Minimum of 50% of all seats determined by reserve lists. | 5-20 for parties not holding at least 3 Landtag seats and for individual candidates. | For seat distribution by list, 5% |
| Baden-Wuerttemberg | See Bavaria | 10-20 for parties not represented in Landtag or preceding council and for local voter groups not in preceding council. | none |
| Schleswig-Holstein | PR and plurality elections | 5-20 for parties not represented in Bundestag, Landtag, or preceding council and for individual candidates. | For seat distribution by list, 5% |

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------|---|------|
| Lower Saxony | Modified PR | 10-30 for all except parties represented in Bundestag or Landtag. | none |
| Saar | PR | <p>3 times the number of elected councilors except for parties represented in Bundestag or Landtag.</p> | 5% |

^aAs of September, 1960.

^bSignatures required for candidacy.

^cPercentage of vote required for representation.

Source: Warner W. Grundmann, Die Rathausparteien (Goettingen: Verlag Otto Schwarz & Co., 1960), pp. 110-111.

APPENDIX C

ALLOCATION OF COUNCIL SEATS BY SIZE OF GEMEINDE^a

| Number of inhabitants | Number of seats |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1 to 150 | 5 |
| 150 to 500 | 7 |
| 500 to 1,000 | 11 |
| 1,000 to 3,000 | 15 |
| 3,000 to 10,000 | 19 |
| 10,000 to 20,000 | 25 |
| 20,000 to 40,000 | 31 |
| 40,000 to 60,000 | 37 |
| 60,000 to 80,000 | 43 |
| 80,000 to 100,000 | 51 |

^aAs of 1960.

Legend

DENSITY=population density
STREETS=municipal streets
SIZE=population size
TAX=community tax strength
COMEIN=commuters (EiPendler)
TRADE=trade
SERVICES=services
WHITCOL=white collar and civil servants
FEMEC=female employees
AGRIC=agriculture
SELFEMPL=Self-employed
COMAUS=commuters (Auspendler)
PRODUCT=production
MANUAL=manual workers

APPENDIX D

CORRELATION MATRIX OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC VARIABLES

| | DENSITY | STREETS | SIZE | TAX | COMEIN | TRADE | SERVICES | WHITCOL | FEMSEC | AGRIC | SELFEMPL | COMAUS | PRODUCT |
|----------|---------|---------|------|-----|--------|-------|----------|---------|--------|-------|----------|--------|---------|
| STREETS | .61 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SIZE | .80 | .85 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TAX | .45 | .32 | .38 | | | | | | | | | | |
| COMEIN | .46 | .24 | .32 | .63 | | | | | | | | | |
| TRADE | .49 | .24 | .32 | .33 | .44 | | | | | | | | |
| SERVICES | .41 | .25 | .33 | .33 | .41 | .42 | | | | | | | |
| WHITCOL | .67 | .40 | .51 | .48 | .60 | .78 | .64 | | | | | | |
| FEMSEC | .33 | .14 | .18 | .23 | .34 | .53 | .22 | .52 | | | | | |
| AGRIC | .59 | .27 | .38 | .42 | .56 | .67 | .57 | .77 | .64 | | | | |
| SELFEMPL | .41 | .16 | .25 | .21 | .36 | .39 | .31 | .53 | .50 | .74 | .68 | | |
| COMAUS | .16 | .15 | .08 | .09 | .08 | .38 | .13 | .34 | .60 | .66 | .72 | .70 | |
| PRODUCT | .41 | .15 | .22 | .28 | .39 | .32 | .08 | .42 | .57 | .83 | .82 | .77 | |
| MANUALS | .35 | .09 | .16 | .20 | .33 | .35 | .24 | .40 | .56 | .82 | .77 | .89 | |

APPENDIX E

THE RELATIONSHIP OF COMMUNAL SOCIO-STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS TO CDU VOTE IN 1965 NATIONAL AND 1963 STATE ELECTIONS

DEMOGRAPHIC CORRELATES OF CDU VOTE IN NATIONAL AND STATE ELECTIONS^a

| Socio-structural variables | CDU vote | |
|-------------------------------|----------|------|
| | 1965 | 1963 |
| Population density | -.18 | -.17 |
| Catholics | .84 | .85 |
| Refugees | -.15 | -.15 |
| Agriculture | .27 | .26 |
| Production | -.22 | -.21 |
| Trade | -.18 | -.18 |
| White collar & civil servants | -.22 | -.18 |
| Manual workers | -.20 | -.18 |
| Female employees | .26 | .25 |
| Self-employed | .21 | .20 |
| Commuters (Auspendler) | -.23 | -.22 |
| Community tax strength | -.21 | -.21 |

^aThe data unit is the Gemeinde. The demographic variables stem from the 1961 census. The 1965 party percentages are those of the second ballot. All the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients are significant at the .001 level.

MULTIPLE STEPWISE REGRESSION OF CDU VOTE IN 1965 NATIONAL AND 1963 STATE ELECTIONS ^a

| | Independent | Multiple | Variance |
|------|-------------|----------|---------------|
| Year | variable | R | accounted for |
| 1965 | Catholics | .834 | .701 |
| | Refugees | .914 | .836 |
| | Trade | .925 | .855 |
| 1963 | Catholics | .848 | .719 |
| | Refugees | .922 | .851 |
| | Trade | .933 | .870 |

^aThe findings are reported only for those variables whose individual contribution to R² was greater than 1 percent. All correlations are significant at the .001 level.

APPENDIX F

THE RELATIONSHIP OF COMMUNAL SOCIO-STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS TO SPD VOTE IN 1965 NATIONAL AND 1963 STATE ELECTIONS

DEMOGRAPHIC CORRELATES OF SPD VOTE IN NATIONAL AND STATE ELECTIONS^a

| Socio-structural variables | CDU vote | |
|---------------------------------|----------|------|
| | 1965 | 1963 |
| Population density | .25 | .24 |
| Catholics | -.72 | -.73 |
| Refugees | .17 | .14 |
| Agriculture | -.43 | -.42 |
| Production | .38 | .37 |
| Trade | .28 | .29 |
| Services | .20 | .19 |
| White collar & civil servants | .32 | .32 |
| Manual workers | .38 | .35 |
| Female employees | -.38 | -.36 |
| Self-employed | -.38 | -.37 |
| Commuters (<u>Auspendler</u>) | .40 | .40 |
| Community tax strength | -.20 | -.21 |

^aThe data unit is the Gemeinde. The demographic variables stem from the 1961 census. The 1965 party percentages are those of the second ballot. All the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients are significant at the .001 level.

MULTIPLE STEPWISE REGRESSION OF SPD VOTE IN 1965 NATIONAL AND 1963 STATE ELECTIONS^a

| Year | Independent variable | Multiple R | Variance accounted for |
|------|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| 1965 | Catholics | .718 | .515 |
| | Refugees | .780 | .639 |
| | Agriculture | .854 | .730 |
| | Commuters (<u>Auspendler</u>) | .862 | .742 |
| 1963 | Catholics | .734 | .540 |
| | Agriculture | .809 | .655 |
| | Refugees | .856 | .732 |

^aThe findings are reported only for those variables whose individual contribution to R^2 was greater than 1 percent. All correlations are significant at the .001 level.

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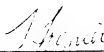
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Linda Landers Dolive was born November 17, 1944, at Chattanooga, Tennessee. In May, 1962, she was graduated from Red Bank High School. She received the degree of Bachelor of Arts, cum laude, with a major in political science from Stetson University in June, 1966. She studied at the University of Freiburg, Germany, for the academic year 1964-1965. In 1966, she enrolled in the Graduate School of the University of Florida in the Department of Political Science. She received the degree of Master of Arts in June, 1969. She held an NDEA-IV fellowship.

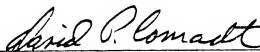
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John W. Spanier, Chairman
Professor of Political Science

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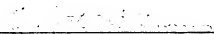
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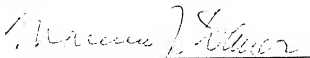
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